TREADING THE DIVERSE PATHS OF MODERNITY: THEORISING ETHNICITY AND NATIONALISM IN TWENTIETH CENTURY SOUTHERN AFRICA

Timothy Neil Moldram
Department of Historical Studies
University of Bristol

A thesis submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts.

1997.

ABSTRACT

In recent years the issue of ethnicity has become of increasing concern to students of southern Africa. In part this has been the result of the resurgence of local nationalisms and ethnicities within the region and also in other parts of the world. Up to the 1970s, the literature on South Africa was generally incurious about the history and nature of ethnicity in the country. The 'Homelands' policy pursued by the nationalist government encouraged commentators to believe that African ethnicity and regional identities were very largely imposed upon them. More broadly, critical literature on southern Africa-including Zimbabwe-tended to emphasise the history of resistance and nationalism or of the emergence of an African working class. During the late 1970s and early 1980s there is a significant historiographical shift. In part this derived from a new concern with ideology and consciousness amongst Southern Africanists. It also resulted from the reassertion of ethnic and regional political demands, especially the re-emergence of the Zulu cultural movement *Inkatha.* More broadly the conflict in Zimbabwe after independence was widely interpreted as being partly ethnic in character. And on a continent-wide and international scale there seemed to be a far clearer assertion of ethnic and sub-national consciousness. In South Africa itself, many of the violent incidents from the mid-80s to the present have been seen to have an ethnic dimension-both within black communities and between them and Afrikaners. Here the legacy of the 'Homelands' policy has been taken much more seriously and deeper questions asked about regional languages, identities and their significance.

A great deal of detailed research has now been done both on the history and recent manifestations of ethnicity in southern Africa. However there has as yet been little attempt to establish a conceptual base for understanding the unfolding of ethnic and regional identities. There have been many books and articles on specific expressions of ethnic identity but few examinations of the rise and fall of such manifestations through time. This thesis is an explicit attempt at a comparative and theoretical analysis of ethnicity, in relation to the emerging nationalisms of South Africa and, to a lesser extent, Zimbabwe. It aims to a significant extent to break new conceptual and analytical ground, rather than to develop a major new empirical case study. Through a critical analysis of the literature, including the related disciplines of Psychology, Sociology and Political Science as well as History, the thesis demonstrates that the development of ethnic identifications in southern Africa can be periodised. Furthermore, each period is demonstrated to exhibit differing levels of ethnic consciousness, interlinked with other forms of identity such as class and gender, and centred upon the entrenchment of the migrant labour process as well as the development of segregation and apartheid.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly I should like to thank my advisor, Professor William Beinart, for the help and encouragement he has given me throughout the planning and execution of this thesis. I am indebted to him for his constructive criticisms, suggestions and comments without which this work would never have materialised. I am also grateful to him for ensuring that I gained the financial assistance necessary for my research trip to South Africa-a trip which opened my eyes in many ways.

Thanks are also due to the staff of the Cory Library, Rhodes University, who unfailingly offered assistance and advice during my time there.

Finally, I owe a particular debt to my partner, Julia, and my two daughters Elouisa and Jasmin. The three years it has taken to complete this thesis have been a period of considerable financial hardship, but Julia has always encouraged and supported me unfailingly. All three have been remarkably patient throughout.

MEMORANDUM

I declare that all unreferenced work in this thesis is my own, and that this dissertation has never been previously submitted at this or any other university.

Timothy N Moldram

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....i

Acknowledgements.....ii

Memorandum.....iii

Table of Contents.....iv

Abbreviations.....viii

INTRODUCTION.....1

1. DEVELOPING THEORIES OF ETHNICITY, AN OVERVIEW. PART 1: FROM THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY TO THE EARLY 1970S.....5

1.1 Early Reactions Against Colonial Concepts of Colonialism.....5

1.2 Rural/Urban Anthropology in Southern Africa, and the 'Situational' Nature of Ethnic Identities, Circa 1930s-1970s.....6

1.3 'Race' and Ethnicity Conflated: The Sociology of Pluralism in the 1960s.....19

1.4 Ethnicity as 'False Consciousness': the Marxist Riposte of the Early 1970s.....21

2. DEVELOPING THEORIES OF ETHNICITY, AN OVERVIEW. PART 2: FROM THE EARLY 1970S TO CIRCA 1990.....26

2.1 Marxism and the Vexed Question of Ethnicity: Marxist Theoretical Approaches Circa 1970-1979.....26

2.2 Anthropology in Crisis: Anthropological Approaches to Ethnicity During the 1970s, With Specific Reference to Southern Africa.....32

2.3 Ethnicity on the Agenda: Marxian Scholarship, Consociationalism and the Subjective Nature of Ethnicity.....37

2.4 Psychology, Anthropology, Gender and Ethnicity.....46

3. FROM MORAL ETHNICITY TO POLITICAL TRIBALISM: PERIODISING TWENTIETH CENTURY SOUTH AFRICAN ETHNICITY, WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE EASTERN CAPE.....50

3.1 Claiming Back the Land: The Ethnic Component of Rural Mobilisation in Early Twentieth Century South Africa.....51

3.2 Migrancy, Mining and Moral Ethnicity: The Reformulation of Ethnic Identities Through the Process of Migrant Labour.....59

3.3 Identities Imposed? The 'Homelands' Policy, Ethnicity and Political Tribalism.....66

3.4 Does the Model Fit? A Retrospective Overview of Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism, Within the Context of Twentieth Century South Africa.....69

4. 'INVENTION', 'IMAGINATION' AND 'REALITY': TERENCE RANGER AS A CASE STUDY OF CHANGING ACADEMIC APPROACHES TO ETHNICITY.....73

4.1 Ethnicities Invented: A Review of Terence Ranger's Early Work on Ethnicity.....74

4.2 Imagined Ethnicities-The African Response. A Critical Analysis of Terence Ranger's Later Works on African Ethnic Identities.....77

4.3 'Imagined' Ethnicities and Ethnicity From 'Below': Does Ranger's Theory Address The Totality of the African 'Ethnic Experience'?.....84

5. THE RE-EMERGENCE OF THE 'WARRIOR' NATION: THE WORK OF SHULA MARKS AND THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF TWENTIETH CENTURY ZULU ETHNIC IDENTITY.....94

5.1 Shula Marks and Zulu Identity in Pre-Apartheid Twentieth Century South Africa.....94

5.2 Shula Marks and the Multiple Levels of Ethnic Identity: Some Theoretical Reflections.....105

5.3 Age-Regiments, Migrant Labour, and the Erosion of Rural Identities.....107

5.4 Culture Brokers and 'Passive' Ethnicity: Shula Marks' Analysis of Zulu Ethnic Identity 1948-Present.....112

6. NATIONAL BOUNDARIES AND IDENTITY FORMATION: TWENTIETH CENTURY SOTHO IDENTITIES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF LESOTHO.....120

6.1 The Beginnings of Sotho Identity: A Brief Overview of Nineteenth Century Lesotho State Formation.....121

6.2 Alien Law, Migrant Labour and the Contested Nature of the Chieftaincy: Sotho Ethnic Identities Prior to Independence.....123

6.3 Sotho Identities Outside of Lesotho's Borders: Apartheid Social Engineering, the QwaQwa 'Homeland' and Rural Slums.....138

6.4 Independence, The End of Apartheid and an Uncertain Future: Post-1966 Lesotho and the Changing Nature of Sotho Identities.....141

7. 'MOTHERS OF THE NATION' AND THE 'THREAT' OF THE 'LOOSE' WOMAN: CONNECTIONS BETWEEN GENDER, MOTHERHOOD, SEXUALITY AND ETHNICISED IDENTITIES IN TWENTIETH CENTURY SOUTH AFRICA.....147

7.1 Idealised Motherhood, Female Independence and Ethnic Identities in Pre-1948 South Africa.....148

7.2 Ethnic Boundary Markers and Routes of Escape: Some Reflections Upon the Relationship Between Gender, Modernity and Ethnic Identity in Pre-1948 South Africa.....162

7.3 Idealised Motherhood, Female Independence and Ethnic Identities in Post-1948 South Africa.....171

7.4 'Motherhood' and the Gendered Nature of Ethnicised Identities in Twentieth Century South Africa: Some Concluding Remarks.....181

8. VIOLENCE, MALE SOCIALISATION AND ETHNIC IDENTITY: THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT.....184

8.1 Male Identity Crises, Youth Gangs, Socialisation and Violence in Early to Mid Twentieth Century South Africa.....185

8.2 Migrant Labour, Ethnic Faction Fights and the Pre-Colonial Connection.....191

8.3 Male Self-Worth, Gender and Morality: The Breakdown of Rural Consciousness Circa 1950s-1970s.....196

8.4 Psychology, Male Violence and Ethnicised Consciousness.....202

8.5 Masculinity, Ethnicised Conflict and the Demise of the Apartheid State.....206
8.6 Male Socialisation, Collective Violence and Ethnic Identity: Some Theoretical Reflections.....210
9. **ETHNICITY AND NATIONALISM: DIFFERING PATHS TO MODERNITY IN TWENTIETH CENTURY SOUTH AFRICA**.....214
9.1 'Strangers in the Land': A Brief Overview of Pre-Colonial Southern African Societies, Identity Formation and Treatment of 'Strangers'.....215
9.2 Nationalism and Ethnicity in Pre-1948 South Africa.....220
9.3 The Changing Nature of Ethnicised Identities Prior to 1948: Some Theoretical Reflections.....230
9.4 Ethnic and National Identities in Post-1948 South Africa.....234
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....245

ABBREVIATIONS

IJAHS.....International Journal of African Historical Studies

JAH.....Journal of African History

JCAS.....Journal of Contemporary African Studies

JMAS.....Journal of Modern African Studies

JSAS.....Journal of Southern African Studies

ROAPE.....Review of African Political Economy

ROSAS.....Review of Southern African Studies

SAHJ.....Southern African Historical Journal

INTRODUCTION

In recent years the issue of ethnicity has become of increasing concern to students of southern Africa. In part this has been the result of the resurgence of local nationalisms and ethnicities within the region and also in other areas of the world. Up to the 1970s, the literature on South Africa was generally incurious about the history and nature of ethnicity in the country. The 'Homelands' policy pursued by the nationalist government encouraged commentators to believe that African ethnicity and regional identities were very largely imposed upon them. More broadly, critical literature on southern Africa-including Zimbabwe-tended to emphasise the history of resistance and nationalism or of the emergence of an African working class. During the late 1970s and early 1980s there is a significant historiographical shift. In part this derived from a new concern with ideology and consciousness amongst Southern Africanists. It also resulted from the reassertion of ethnic and regional political demands, especially the re-emergence of the Zulu cultural movement *Inkatha*. More broadly the conflict in Zimbabwe after independence was widely interpreted as being partly ethnic in character. And on a continent-wide and international scale there seemed to be a far clearer assertion of ethnic and sub-national consciousness. In South Africa itself, many of the violent incidents from the mid-80s to the present have been seen to have an ethnic dimension-both within black communities and between them and Afrikaners. Here the legacy of the 'Homelands' policy has been taken much more seriously and deeper questions asked about regional languages, identities and their significance.

A great deal of detailed research has now been done both on the history and recent manifestations of ethnicity in southern Africa. However there has as yet been little attempt to establish a conceptual base for understanding the unfolding of ethnic and regional identities. There have been many books and articles on specific expressions of ethnic identity but as yet there has been little attempt to examine the rise and fall of such manifestations through time. This thesis is an explicit attempt at a comparative and theoretical analysis of ethnicity, in relation to the emerging nationalisms of South Africa and, to a lesser extent, Zimbabwe. It aims to a significant extent to break new conceptual and analytical ground, rather than to develop a major new empirical case study. Material from related disciplines, such as Social Anthropology and Sociology, are drawn upon extensively, especially in the South African context. During the 1930s and 1960s social anthropologists working in South Africa produced a rich vein of material concerning issues of social, economic and cultural change in black communities. Although not specifically concerned with ethnic identities, their findings are shown to contribute to a greater understanding of the development of these phenomena over time. In particular, the work of Phillip and Iona Mayer in the Eastern Cape region of South Africa provides considerable material relating to how black communities re-worked identities in

the wake of institutionalised racism, migrant labour and gradual urbanisation and industrialisation. Previously unpublished material, produced by the Mayers themselves and their chief field assistant Percy Qayiso, is drawn upon heavily.[1] These studies, when set within an historical context, demonstrate that black communities participated actively in the forging of differing levels of ethnic consciousness throughout the twentieth century. The material drawn from other anthropological research concerned with related issues provides similar insights. The work of two major historians in the field, Shula Marks and Terence Ranger, is also subjected to critical analysis.

The first two chapters provide an overview of changing theoretical approaches to ethnicity throughout the twentieth century. Those receiving critical analysis include the major contributions from related disciplines such as Social Antropology, Sociology, Psychology and Political Science, as well as History. The first chapter examines the major works in this field from the early twentieth century up to the Structural Marxist analyses of the early 1970s. The second chapter takes this analysis from the early 1970s up to *circa* 1990. Anthropological works concerned with social and cultural change amongst southern African communities in the 1930s and 1960s are implicitly demonstrated throughout these two chapters to contribute significantly to a greater understanding of the multiple levels of ethnic identities within the region. The overview concludes around 1990 due to the fact that academic studies concerned with ethnicity have proliferated considerably since then, and cannot be systematically analysed within the confines of one chapter. Works concerned with ethnicity and nationalism produced since 1990 receive critical attention throughout the rest of the thesis.

Chapter three provides an historically contingent theoretical framework with which to analyse the rise, fall and development of ethnic identities in twentieth century South Africa, set within the specific region of the Eastern Cape. The conceptual model of John Lonsdale is adapted to the South African context[2] and is shown, in conjunction with the anthropological work of the Mayers, to provide a useful theoretical tool with which to periodise and distinguish the various forms of ethnic mobilisations within the century concerned. This theoretical framework is applied throughout most of the rest of the thesis.

The fourth chapter analyses the research of a major historian concerned with ethnicity and nationalism, Terence Ranger. Ranger's work is particularly useful in gaining a greater

---

[1] P. and I. Mayer, 'Self-Organisation by Youth amongst the Xhosa-Speaking Peoples of the Ciskei and Transkei', 2 Vols, Unpublished Typescript, Cory Library, 1972; P. Qayiso, 'Xhosa Morality', Unpublished Typescript, MS 16891/5 Cory Library, c.1964.

[2] J. Lonsdale, 'Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism', in P. Kaarsholm and J. Hultin (eds), *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism*, International Development Studies Occasional Paper No 11, Roskilde, University, 1994. Also see J, Lonsdale and B. Berman, *Unhappy Valley; Conflict in Kenya and Africa. Book 2, Violence and Ethnicity*, London, 1992.

theoretical understanding of ethnic identities in southern Africa for several reasons. Firstly, his conceptual shift from 'invention' to 'imagination' exemplifies the way studies of ethnic identities have been reformulated in southern Africa in recent times. His depth and breadth of reading and research, together with his constant willingness to 'soak up' other theoretical trends and ideas and change his own approach accordingly, also justifies a case study. Finally, his work concerning ethnic identities in Zimbabwe is important in that it demonstrates that the divisions and conflicts amongst black Zimbabweans, both before and after independence, was not due to some form of primordial, ancient ethnic animosity. This latter misconception was very prominent amongst journalists and political commentators at the time, and is still prominent amongst many people today. This chapter does not develop the theoretical model in chapter three, as it is primarily concerned with the changing theoretical approaches of Ranger. However, the rest of the thesis is set within its conceptual paradigm.

Chapter five has a dual function. Firstly, it analyses the development of Zulu ethnic nationalism in the twentieth century. This constructed form of identity has acquired special significance in the last two decades, and an historical examination of its development provides a more comprehensive understanding of politicised ethnicity in contemporary South Africa. Secondly, there is a concurrent analysis of the studies of Zulu ethnicity carried out by Shula Marks, a prominent historian of Zulu ethnicity. Her work is especially important in that it stresses the prominence of African agency in forging ethnic identities, as did earlier anthropological studies. Therefore her research provides a useful comparison with the theoretical model developed in chapter three.

The sixth chapter analyses the development of Sotho identities both within and outside of the Lesotho nation-state. This allows a further examination of the relationship between differing levels of ethnicity, and those of nationalism, gender and class, and an analysis of a nation-state which has historically been economically dominated by South Africa. Sotho identities in former 'Homelands' such as QwaQwa are examined comparatively with those existing within the nation-state itself.

Chapters seven and eight demonstrate the deeply gendered nature of ethnicised identities in South Africa throughout the twentieth century. Chapter seven analyses the specific roles conferred on women by nationalist and ethnic culture brokers, both within African and Afrikaner communities, throughout the twentieth century, and how women could subvert and escape these imposed identities. The position of women within ethnic and nationalist ideologies is demonstrated to be essential in the upkeep of these forms of group identifications. Issues such as constructions of motherhood and changing concepts of sexuality and sexual behaviour are explored as related issues. Chapter eight analyses the

development of, and relationship between, violence, ethnicity, and male socialisation within black communities in the period in question. Again, different disciplines are drawn upon, such as Sociology, Anthropology and Psychology, in order to enhance historical analysis, and the work of the Mayers is also demonstrated to provide important insights.

The final chapter draws the theoretical strands of the previous chapters together, and provides an overview of the development of nationalist and ethnic identities within twentieth century South Africa. The relationship between these identifications receives particular analysis, and both Afrikaner and African communities are compared and contrasted, demonstrating the diverse routes that people trod towards modernity in this century.

Throughout the thesis emphasis is placed on the importance of the migrant labour process in South Africa in the formation of ethnic and nationalist identities. Migrant labour also affected identity development throughout southern Africa, as it drew its labour force from many of the surrounding countries. Afrikaner and black African communities receive most critical analysis as they have developed the two main forms of nationalism-civic and ethnic-which have developed in South Africa, thus allowing a comparision between ethnic and nationalist identities. Both ethnic and nationalist identities are shown to be inextricably intertwined with other forms of identity, such as class and gender. The use of anthropological literature concerning South Africa from the 1930s and 1960s, when set within an historically contingent context, demonstrates that ethnic identities can exist on several levels, and need not be politicised. They can exist in a more 'passive', cultural context, although this is not to argue that they were primordial and static. The fluidity and adaptibility of ethnic identifications are emphasised throughout, although these could be rigidified and reified by various ethnic culture brokers. As the first two chapters illustrate, anthropological literature has received considerable criticism in South Africa for reifying identities in a primordial fashion. Whilst not denying that many forms of Anthropology did just this, and often reinforced segregationist and apartheid ideologies, there were some works which cannot be categorised in this fashion. These offer many insights into the development of ethnic identifications in a century of considerable, but uneven, industrialisation and modernisation, and the growth of institutionalised racism.

1. DEVELOPING THEORIES OF ETHNICITY, AN OVERVIEW. PART 1: FROM THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY TO THE EARLY 1970S.

Definitions, concepts and creations of 'tribe' and ethnicity manifested themselves in many different guises in the academic literature of this period. Theoretical approaches engaged with the phenomenon in markedly diverse ways, often influenced by the political climate of the time. Additionally, conceptualisations of ethnicity were developed differently depending upon the particular academic discipline that was being utilised in order to study it. This chapter will analyse the approaches of rural and urban anthropology from the early twentieth century to the 1970s, the sociology of pluralism that emerged in the 1960s, colonial conceptions of 'tribe', and the Marxist critique of many of these approaches that emerged in the early 1970s. Southern Africa provides the main area of reference, but interpretations of ethnic identity in other countries will be analysed where appropriate. Finally, it is important to note that colonial conceptions of 'tribe' will be analysed through the analytical prisms of the academic disciplines in question. This is due to the fact that colonial interpretations often provided the basis from which the academic disciplines in question formulated their own hypotheses, and in turn criticise one another.

1.1 Early Reactions Against Colonial Concepts of Primordialism

One of the first attempts to move beyond primordialist concepts of ethnicity (which were adhered to by many colonialist administrators) was that of the Cambridge anthropologist A. C. Haddon and the biologist Julian Huxley.[3] They placed much emphasis on an explicit rejection of the biological meaning of 'race', and represented one of the earliest discussions about the 'Primordialist' and 'Instrumentalist' views - a debate that provides the fundamental basis for virtually all academic theories regarding nationalism and ethnicity at least until 1990.[4] Their work, conceived in the context of the rise of 1930s fascism with its particularly virulent brand of primordialist discourse, was influenced by the political climate of the time. Huxley and Haddon's arguments are significant in terms of the developing historiography concerning ethnicity in that, until the appearance of their work, primordialist concepts of colonised peoples were utilised in order to justify colonialism. Nineteenth century explorers, Colonial administrators and anthropologists often provided the ideological ammunition for colonial rule in terms of perceived 'biological traits', and this continued well into the twentieth century.[5]

---

[3] J.C. Huxley and A.C. Haddon, *We Europeans: A Survey of 'Racial' Problems*, London, 1935.

[4] See A. Smith, *National Identity*, London, 1991, J. Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, London, 1991, and A. Smith and J. Hutchinson (eds), *Ethnicity*, Oxford, 1996 for examples of the many theoretical discussions concerned with this debate.

[5] For an interesting analysis of one particular example of colonial anthropology, and its concern with these issues, see T. Ranger, 'The Mobilisation of Labour and the Production of Knowledge: The Antiquarian Tradition in Rhodesia', *JAH*, Vol 20, No 4, 1979. Also see S. Dubow, *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa, 1919-1936*, London, 1989, and S. Dubow, *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*, Cambridge, 1995.

However, not all anthropological works drew such an essentialist, static, primordialist picture. For example, Wilson produced a very complex and detailed account of rural Mpondo society in South Africa in the 1930s.[6] Anthropologists such as Epstein and Mayer later provided similar works set within urban contexts.[7] All these works are, to a greater or lesser extent, suggestive of the fluidity of African identities, and their ability to adapt to changing situations - including that of capitalist and colonial penetration. It is worth examining these works in some detail for several reasons. Firstly, they have often been criticised by early 1970s Marxist historians such as Magubane for indirectly reinforcing colonialism and South African apartheid.[8] This debate needs to be analysed in some depth. Secondly, the 'situational' model for African ethnic identities which these works suggest contrasts markedly with primordialist oriented models. Thus they further the 'Primordialist/Instrumentalist' debate to which reference was made earlier. Thirdly, there are differences between these theoretical approaches which require examination. Fourthly, these works are perhaps the first to demonstrate how categories such as race, class, gender and age intertwine and articulate with ethnic identities. Finally, these works suggest that ethnic identities can exist in cultural, as well as political, terms. The existence of multiple layers of ethnic identities, situated in the differing but overlapping spheres of culture, politics and economy, is a central tenet of this thesis.[9]

1.2 Rural/Urban Anthropology in Southern Africa, and the 'Situational' Nature of Ethnic Identities. Circa 1930s-1970.

One of the fascinations of studying past theoretical models, whether they originate from Anthropology, History or any other related discipline, resides in discovering that contemporary modes of theoretical analyses, despite their claims to sophistication, are not always as ground - breaking as they seem. This seems particularly so with regard to studies of ethnicity and nationalism. Furthermore, it becomes especially apparent when rural and anthropological works of the period in question are compared to more recent works such as that of Vail's *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa.*[10] 'Situational' concepts of ethnic identification are particularly useful in demonstrating this point. It is also important to recognise the salience of these works in contemporary historiography, in order to further the historical understanding of ethnic identity formation.

---

[6] M. Wilson. *Reaction to Conquest*, London, 1964, (2nd. ed). The first edition was published in 1936.

[7] See for example P. Mayer, *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, London, 1961, and A. Epstein, *Politics in An Urban African Community.* Manchester, 1958.

[8] B. Magubane. 'The 'Xhosa' in Town Revisited. Urban Anthropology: A Failure in Method and Theory', *American Anthropologist*, Vol 75,1969.

[9] Anthropological studies of social change, in addition to the ones examined in this chapter, were particularly rich in the 1930s and 1960s in South Africa. They offer useful insights into the fluid processual nature of African cultural identities which fed into developing ethnicities, and will receive critical attention throughout later chapters.

[10] L. Vail., *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, 1989.

One of the earliest rural anthropological works which implicitly demonstrates facets of the 'situational' nature of ethnic identification is that of Monica Wilson. Originally published in 1936, her study of the Mpondo and their reaction to the penetration of colonialism and capitalism presages much of Epstein's later theoretical tenets of the late 1950s, as well as much of Vail's collected edition (itself hailed as a landmark in the study of Southern African ethnicity in the late 1980s). A particularly significant element of this research is its study of Mpondo interpretations of the changes wrought by colonial ideology and the gradual introduction of a capitalist economy. Wilson argues in the preface that her study owes an intellectual debt to Bronislaw Malinowski. Malinowski was the first to introduce the Functionalist approach to social anthropology, which was based on the premise that all customs had contemporary functions, 'even if these were only vaguely concerned with reinforcing the importance of traditional ways of behaving'.[11] This is reflected in the contents of Wilson's book, which provides an enormous amount of material concerning the 'functions' of various customs. Malinowski's approach failed, however, to take fully into account social change. This gave the impression that the societies he studied were situated in a type of timeless stasis. Wilson's work avoids this pitfall. In 1945, she co- developed a theoretical paradigm attempting to explain societal change.[12] The seeds of this approach are also evident in her earlier research, such as her study of the Mpondo analysed below. Her study of religion and social change, thirty years after the 1945 work, also remained rooted in its insights.[13] This later research also demonstrates the influence of Wilson's Christian beliefs on her work. Her concept of the articulation between Christianity, economy, consciousness, and increasing scale of society in promoting social change is particularly poignant, demonstrating both her liberal, individualist and Christian religious beliefs. Arguably, this could be said to adversely influence her study of non-Christian societies, in that she could be conceived to approach them from a Christian, subjective, viewpoint. However in an essay written in celebration of Wilson, Audrey Richards refers to this criticism as follows:

> *This seems to me an unreasonable criticism. It is not only that she makes a point of announcing , with typical honesty, when she is speaking as a Christian rather than as an anthropologist, whereas many Marxists, who also have strong views on religion, do not. It seems to me possible that an anthropologist who has never had the experience of believing in a supernatural power nor of feeling the efficacy of ritual may find it difficult to understand the religion of another*

---

[11] A. Cheater, *Social Anthropology: An Alternative Introduction*, London, 1989.
[12] G. Wilson, M. Wilson, *The Analysis of Social Change*, Cambridge, 1945.
[13] M. Wilson, *Religion and the Transformation of Society*, Cambridge, 1971.

people.[14]

Wilson's works demonstrate her ability to record the subjective consciousnesses of the people being studied. This is particularly important, not only in the study of religion, but also when analysing ethnic identities. For the subjective consciousnesses of the ordinary mass of the people shape the 'passive', cultural elements of ethnic identity. Furthermore, these 'passive' forms of cultural identification work on a subconscious level. Brownlie, in his study of South African peoples in the late nineteenth century, makes the following observation:

> *Many men believe that most barbarous tribes have no religion at all, and that they do not recognise a Supreme Being, but this opinion, in most if not all cases, on due inquiry, will be found to be incorrect, and it is quite easy to account for this erroneous impression. Ask a barbarian about his religious belief, or what is generally termed superstition, and why he does this or that, and he will say that he does not know, or that is the custom. In many cases the answer is an honest one; the man really does not know why he does certain things. Exactly as in Christian churches, where forms and ceremonies are adopted, the great body of worshippers may be in utter ignorance of the import of the forms used either by themselves or the celebrant.*[15]

Although Brownlie's comment refers primarily to religion, it applies equally to 'passive' ethnic identifications. Communities held to particular customs unquestionally, as they were embedded deep in the recipient's psyche. They thus represented a taken for granted recipe for life. However, these passive forms of identification formed the cultural bedrock from which more dynamic, mobilised forms of ethnic identities were constructed. This is not to suggest a primordialist essentialism inherent in ethnicity, but rather that earlier forms of identity could be mobilised in a more dynamic fashion. Passive ethnic identifications also continued to survive well into the twentieth century, although they were gradually eroded as rural patterns of life, based on the institution of the chieftaincy and the homestead, became increasingly difficult to sustain in the wake of colonialism and capitalist penetration.

Through emphasising such elements as rationalism and political economy (although these are important areas of research), Marxists tend to sideline this subjective element, or try to explain

---

[14] A. Richards, 'Monica Wilson: An Appreciation', in M. Whisson and M. West (eds), *Religion and Social Change in Southern Africa: Anthropological Essays in Honour of Monica Wilson*, London, 1975.
[15] C. Brownlie, *Reminiscences of Kafir Life and History*, Natal, 1977 (c. and passim), p.241.

it primarily in rationalist terms. Even the more sophisticated Marxian analyses of the 1980s tended towards this approach. Additionally, as religious elements in pre-colonial societies tended to be inseparable from the secular, and contributed towards the shaping of 'passive' ethnic consciousnesses, it seems reasonable to argue that an analysis of ordinary peoples' subjective ethnic consciousnesses, understood in their own terms, is a fundamental prerequisite in gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of ethnic identities in general. Certainly religion played a major part in ethnic conflict in many southern African societies in the aftermath of colonial conquest. However, despite Wilson's ability to incorporate social change within her theoretical analysis, early 1970s Marxists still criticised anthropological approaches for being ahistorical in nature. With hindsight, this is certainly applicable to such as Malinowski, but less so Wilson. She was already demonstrating her capability to take social change on board in her 1930s work on Mpondo society.[16]

Wilson's concept of what she terms 'Selective Conservatism' is particularly interesting, in that it reflects much of the later theoretical models expounded by Mayer and Epstein. The concept itself is concerned with Mpondo resistance in the 1930s to certain elements of economic and social change which the Europeans wished to introduce. This was particularly the case with colonial attempts to limit the number of cattle that Africans owned on the reserves.[17] She also perceived that there were different degrees of acceptance of colonial introduced changes amongst different groups of Mpondo: 'the degree of external pressure and of internal resistance are forces determining the liability of different aspects of a culture to change, in the same way as they determine the liability of different communities to change'.[18] Wilson also refers to what she terms the 'Red/School' split in Mpondo society in the 1930s, which reflected the variation in acceptance of colonial rule and subsequent introduction of social and economic change.[19] It is this recognition of inter- and intra-community debates, regarding the extent to which colonial introduced change should be accepted, that is of crucial importance in understanding ethnic identity and its subsequent mobilisation. Wilson's conceptualisation of this moral debate is an early example of the ideas which were developed by Mayer in East London during the 1960s, which implicitly illustrates how ethnic identification can exist at several levels. Works such as that of Mayer and Epstein reflect the 'situationally selective' model of identity formation and mobilisation initially recognised by Wilson. Mayer and Epstein worked in a rapidly changing political climate, with African nationalism growing throughout the continent. Therefore it is worthwhile comparing their findings with that of Wilson, whilst setting their theoretical assumptions within their specific historical context. This is important, as the

---

[16] See M. Wilson, *Reaction to Conquest.* However, it is important to recognise that Wilson does not provide a systematic view of historical change, only a kind of 'before and after' approach.
[17] M. Wilson, *Reaction to Conquest*, p.540.
[18] Ibid, p.549.
[19] Ibid, p.p.548-554.

political climate of the 1960s and 1970s dictated how these works would be received, and subsequently how they would be criticised.

The Rhodes-Livingstone Institute in Lusaka was a birthplace of the 'situational' concept of ethnic identity formation. Urban anthropologists such as Godfrey Wilson, Max Gluckman, J. Clyde Mitchell and A. Epstein, prominent at this institute, became known as the Manchester School due to their later affiliation with the University of Manchester. Their work was specifically associated with the particular form of urbanisation occurring in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) from the 1930s onwards. The demand for labour in the copper mines had provoked a stream of migration from the rural areas to the mining towns, many workers settling in large barracks. This form of migratory labour had several significant effects upon the social situation of these workers, according to various members of the Manchester School. Firstly, workers were seen as having entered a predominantly monetary economy as wage labourers, whereas they had previously lived as subsistence farmers in a rural situation.[20] Secondly, their social organisation changed from being based on rural kinship to being virtually entirely dictated by the mining organisation, with their families left behind in the rural villages. Finally, the social system which they encountered at the mines was far larger and much more complex than that which existed in the rural areas. This entailed them coming into daily contact with a large number of other ethnic groups. Furthermore this type of social change was very similar to that occurring in South Africa at the same time.

The Manchester School's main theoretical focus was concerned with social and cultural continuity and change within African communities, as a result of the changes mentioned above. There were differences of opinion between them. For example, Godfrey Wilson argued in the 1940s that the changes wrought had sparked a process of 'detribalisation'.[21] However, J. Clyde Mitchell, and others, in their later studies carried out in the 1950s, argued that a process of 'retribalisation' was occurring in the mining towns.[22] Epstein's research in particular contained interesting similarities with that of Monica Wilson's earlier work mentioned above. He introduced the theoretical concept of 'situational selection', which aimed to demonstrate the flexibility of African mine workers in utilising this form if identification. Mayer summarises the concept lucidly: 'it has demonstrated that in certain interactions the urban workers still attach prime importance to their respective tribal identities, but that industrial work involves them in new sets of relations, in which they eventually became aware of the irrelevance of tribal categories'.[23]

---

[20] One of the problems with many anthropological views of change is their tendency to collapse the wide variety of precolonial societies into the category 'subsistences'.

[21] G. Wilson, *Essays on the Economics of Detribalization*, Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, 1941-2.

[22] See for example J. Clyde Mitchell, *The Kalela Dance*, Manchester, 1956.

[23] P. Mayer, *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, p.xiii, preface.

Epstein further argues that at work Africans formed urban associations, particularly trade unions. Thus a mine worker in town can switch back and forth 'from "urban" to "tribal" patterns in his domestic life, yet deprecate a 'tribal' system of representation for dealing with the White management of mines'.[24] The basis of Epstein's approach thus rests on the premise that Africans still interacted in terms of a 'tribal' (what is referred to today as 'ethnic') relationship. Furthermore, because the various sets of relations which make up the urban social system are interdependent, this form of ethnic identification tends to be carried over into, and to operate within, all the sets of relations in which urban Africans are involved. 'But as we move from the sphere of inter-personal relations into the sphere of political relations other factors come into play. Here...the tribal factor may be outweighed by the strength of the other interests involved'.[25] In this case, class affiliations are selected above 'tribal' ones.

The concept of 'situational selection' is important in that it moves away from primordialist notions of African 'tribal' identities, towards a more instrumentalist approach. According to Epstein, African migrant workers employed on the Copperbelt consciously selected different identities in order to suit the particular situation they found themselves in at the time. To a certain extent this reflects more contemporary analyses of ethnic identification, such as that of John Lonsdale, who argues that this form of identification is a state of mind.[26] Lonsdale's analysis will be examined in later chapters, but it is worth noting that earlier anthropological studies considerably pre-dated some of his assumptions. Another important aspect of the research pursued by the Manchester School and Phillip Mayer was that it offered a partially alternative interpretation to that of the dominant 'Modernisation' theoretical paradigm of the 1950s/1960s. As Vail states, most observers at the time believed that 'parochial ethnic loyalties were merely cultural ghosts lingering on into the present, weakened anomalies from a fast receding past'.[27] As such they were considered destined to disappear under the onslaught of the social, economic and political changes prevalent at the time. Works such as that of the Manchester School pointed to a reformulation of ethnic identification within a specifically urban context.

This concept of new ethnic consciousnesses emerging primarily from the urban work place has now been convincingly criticised. As Vail argues in his own edited work concerning Southern African ethnic identities, stressing the essentially non-rural nature of the growth of ethnic stereotypes, 'implicitly accepts the notion that rural Africa was preserved in some sort

---

[24] Ibid.
[25] A. Epstein. *Politics in an Urban African Community*, Manchester, 1958.
[26] B. Berman and J. Lonsdale. *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa. Book 2: Violence and Ethnicity*, London, 1992.
[27] L. Vail. *The Creation of Tribalism*, p.1.

of "traditional pickle", antithetically opposed to "modern" industrial Africa and largely untouched by the forces of change associated with capitalist expansion and urbanisation'.[28] In contrast to the Manchester School he implies that the ability of the mining organisation to have such a pervasive effect on the migrants' social world is highly debatable, as is the concept of pre-colonial rural ethnic groups living in comparative isolation. More recent works, including that of Vail, demonstrate convincingly that rural areas were not confined in a 'traditional' backwater. However, the Manchester School did demonstrate that ethnic identities were not going to disappear quickly under the impact of industrialisation and colonial ideology. Furthermore Phillip Mayer, writing at approximately the same time as, although not part of, the Manchester School, did recognise the articulation between rural and urban ethnic constructs. His research is of importance as it pre-empted by nearly thirty years much of the findings of more contemporary scholars working in the field of ethnicity. His studies also provoked considerable Marxist criticism of anthropology in the early 1970s, due to the perceived relationship between anthropologists and the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Mayer was specifically concerned with the effect of urbanisation upon the Xhosa communities living in and around East London in South Africa in the late 1950s. He placed particular emphasis on the conflict between what he termed 'Red' and 'School' social categories of the local Xhosa population. He argued that this social schism reflected a bitter conflict within the Xhosa community concerning the desirability or undesirability of adopting 'white peoples' ways, which had split the Xhosa for several generations.[29] The recognition of this schism built upon the findings of the Manchester School, as it also demonstrated the increase in ethnic identification due to the effects of urbanisation. However, it additionally transposed this to a rural context and it is at this juncture that the originality of Mayer's theoretical approach becomes apparent. Mayer perceived the Xhosa communities in the vicinity of East London as split between 'assimilated' (i.e. fully urbanised) Xhosa townspeople who had forsaken Xhosa 'traditional' culture; the 'Red' Xhosa ('red' referring to the smearing of their bodies and clothes with red ochre), 'who still stand by the indigenous way of life, including the pagan Xhosa religion'; and the 'School' Xhosa who are perceived as 'products of the mission and the School, holding up Christianity, literacy and other Western ways as ideal'.[30] He primarily concentrated on the latter two categories, and how the effects of urbanisation divided them.

There are several significant points which can be extracted from this anthropological study, and which reflect its uniqueness at the time it was written. The fact that it argues for an articulation between rural and urban concepts of ethnicity has already been stated. It also implicitly demonstrates that sub-cultural forms of ethnicity, stemming from an original pre-

---

[28] Ibid, p.4.
[29] P. Mayer. *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, p.viii, preface.
[30] Ibid.

industrial form of ethnic identification, proliferate rapidly as ethnic identities become increasingly debated within the context of social and economic change. Thirdly, Mayer also approaches gender issues, with many of his findings being reflected in more contemporary studies of gender and ethnicity.[31] Finally, and most importantly, Mayer implicitly demonstrates that ethnicity exists at a subjective, emotionally felt, level and is not merely an example of constructed ideology. This stands in stark contrast to the early 1970s Marxian critiques of anthropological works concerning South Africa, which portrayed ethnic identification as a form of 'false consciousness' in the true Orthodox Marxist tradition. Additionally, in some respects it offers a greater insight into the multiple layers of ethnic consciousnesses than more contemporary historians such as Vail (see chapter three). Furthermore, it demonstrates that ethnic identity formation is not just a constructed phenomenon, formulated by an intellectual elite for their own self-interest.

However Mayer did not initially dispute Epstein's analysis that 'trade unions transcend tribes'.[32] Thus his line of analysis contained the implicit assumption that ethnicities could easily be transformed into a national identity through the unions being coopted into a nationalist movement. This rather naive, teleological concept has been found lacking in the light of the increasing and widespread number of ethnic movements in Africa today. However, where anthropologists such as Mayer and Epstein differed from the dominant African Nationalist paradigm of the 1950s/1960s was in the fact that they recognised the ability of ethnic consciousnesses to adapt to a changing socio/economic situation, even if they were supposed to succumb eventually to the forces of 'modernisation'.

Mayer in fact precludes the possibility of 'situational selection' occuring amongst the Xhosa, in the way that Epstein interprets the process. For in East London the salient sociological features were very different. The apartheid regime did not recognise trade unions, and reacted quickly to suppress their formation. Thus, in the case of East London in the late 1950s/early 1960s, trade unions could not transcend 'tribes' anyway, as their activities were often suppressed by the state. Mayer also argues that there were no different 'tribes' to be transcended, for almost all the large urban labour force was drawn from 'the solidly Xhosa-speaking Native Reserves in the hinterland'.[33] (This assumption is open to dispute, for there was an inter-ethnic Xhosa-Mfengu cleavage which occured for largely the same reasons as the 'Red'/'School' split. Paradoxically, Mayer does recognise this second split, as mentioned below, and there will be a fuller analysis of this anomaly in chapter three). 'Thus 'Red' and 'School' ethnic sub-categories became, according to Mayer, the main social cleavage in East London, representing an intra-ethnic - rather than an inter-ethnic - division. As this cleavage

---

[31] See later chapters for examples.
[32] P. Mayer. *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, p.viii, preface.
[33] Ibid.

was situated in the rural areas, this also entailed a shift away from 'the relations and situations of work to those of leisure, where people (were) at liberty to act out their different convictions.'[34] Mayer thus accepted that 'situational selection' did occur amongst the Xhosa community he was studying, but in a different format, and with different consequences for the historical actors concerned:

> *The reference groups are distinct, but as the possibilities of transferring allegiance from one reference group to another are considerable, a man's choices have a particular significance: they show whether or not he intends to remain within his original social category. This question of choice as a determinant of mobility could not arise where the social categories (as in the Copperbelt) are ethnic, birth-determined ones.*[35]

Nevertheless, there was some form of inter-ethnic conflict which mirrored the 'Red'/'School' schism, and Mayer illustrates this by situating his study within its specific historical context. He dates this cultural differentiation back to the late nineteenth century, and to the differing reactions of the Xhosa and Mfengu peoples to colonial conquest in the area. He refers to the fact that many Xhosa continuously resisted colonial imposed rule for a whole century, until the end of the ninth so-called 'Frontier War' in 1877. The Mfengu, in contrast, tended not to resist the imposition of colonial rule, due to their specific history immediately prior to the colonial wars. Until quite recently most historiographical interpretations of Mfengu origins have argued that they were in fact relative newcomers to the area, having fled the *Mfecane* wars in Natal.[36] In order to gain sanctuary with the Xhosa peoples in the area, they had to accept subordinate societal status. Thus the Mfengu interpreted the arrival of the British as a way of improving their social status, and consequently tended not to resist colonialist impositions, although there were exceptions.[37] Peires, in a more contemporary study of the same area, specifically dates the 'Red'/'School' cleavage to 1835 when the Mfengu were persuaded by the missionary Ayliff to desert their Xhosa patrons and seek colonial protection.[38] This resulted in the Mfengu being granted vast tracts of Xhosa land by the British as reward for their non-opposition. Additionally, their acceptance of missionary-based European education enabled them to gain elite positions in the colonial economic and administrative structure. At the time

---

[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid, p.ix, preface.
[36] Mfengu origins and identity have recently become the subject of a vigorous historiographical debate. This is explored in chapters 2, 3, and 9.
[37] P. Mayer, *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, p.p.31-32.
[38] J. Peires. 'Ethnicity and Pseudo-Ethnicity in the Ciskei', in L. Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism*, p.p.395-413.

of Mayer's study, the Mfengu were 'School' people of long standing. He records that the 'Red' Xhosa bitterly resented this comparatively recent Mfengu economic and social dominance, perceiving the Mfengu as 'traitors', and that this represented an extreme example of the 'Red'/'School' social divide.[39]

Thus the specific history of the area had a profound impact upon the more contemporary social schism with which Mayer was concerned. Mayer recorded several significant ways in which this schism manifested itself in the late 1950s/early 1960s. He particularly stresses dress, education, religion and etiquette as four areas where 'Red' and 'School' Xhosa symbolically represented their perceived sub-cultural/ethnic distinctiveness.[40] 'Red' Xhosa generally retained traditional elements within these spheres, and stressed pre-colonial moral values, whilst 'School' Xhosa promoted western values and representations of it (such as individualism and Christianity). Furthermore, this distinction - as already mentioned - originated from the penetration of colonialism and capitalism and the varied reactions to this upheaval by these two particular groups. Nevertheless, Mayer illustrated that this social division was not simply one of a 'traditional/modern' dichotomy. His study demonstrated that it was a far more complex manifestation than that. This also distinguishes his theoretical hypotheses from those of Epstein. For, unlike Epstein, he argued that even what he perceived as the most 'conservative' elements of Xhosa culture in the area were not simply ossified relics from the past, incapable of change. Conversely, the 'School' Xhosa adherence to 'westernised' values and mores did not preclude them from utilising more traditional elements of Xhosa culture and custom when they felt it appropriate. This differs markedly from the conclusions of those commentators promoting the above mentioned African nationalist paradigm concerning ethnicity.

Religion was just one example which Mayer utilised in order to demonstrate his hypothesis. For example, he found that although 'Red' Xhosa held the 'pagan' Xhosa religion and ancestor cults as central to their identity, and although 'School' Xhosa promoted 'western' Christianity, this did not represent the complete picture. In reality Mayer observed a far more complex scenario, whereby the actions of the two sub-cultures/ethnicities in question did not completely correspond with how they verbally differentiated themselves. In other words, actual inter-ethnic relations could diverge from stereotypes as presented in conversation. This may seem an obvious point to make, but it is nevertheless fundamental in furthering an understanding of the processes of ethnic identification. For example, Mayer states that many 'Red' people, although adamant in their opposition to western ideologies, did in fact often dabble in Christianity to a certain extent. He observed that 'Red' people who were concerned about a

---

[39] P. Mayer. *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, p.32. Again, the differences between the 'Red'/'School' divide, and the Xhosa/Mfengu divide, which Mayer does not bring out fully, will receive further analysis in later chapters.
[40] Ibid, chapter 2.

particular problem would often be pleased for Christian neighbours to pray for them at the same time as receiving treatment from diviners or herbalists. Christian prayers were also often invited as a contribution to pagan funerals.[41] Conversely, 'School' Christians, including full church members, were 'often also partly committed to the ancestor cult...A considerable proportion, even of full church members, actually conduct(ed) sacrifices at their own homes'.[42] Mayer demonstrates that this difference betweeen rhetoric and reality occurred in many other aspects of East London's Xhosa community in the 1950s/1960s, such as attitudes towards education.[43] Mayer's study here demonstrates the complex relationship between social and cultural change and continuity, reflecting the earlier concerns of J. Clyde Mitchell in his *The Kalela Dance* (1956).

This complex interplay between continuity and change relates directly to another fundamental element involved in the formation of ethnic consciousness and mobilisation, whether this is within the political or cultural realm - that of defining ethnic identity as set against the 'Other'. Mayer argued that, for the 'Red' Xhosa, 'opposition to the White group tend(ed) to go with a heightened resistance to White ways and appreciation of 'tribal' ones'.[44] He then drew specific comparisons with Gluckman's study of the Zulu, which came to similar conclusions.[45] This suggests that ethnic mobilisation sometimes occurs when a specific people encounter another community. In order to retain their identity, differences between their culture and that of the 'Other' are thus accentuated. This dichotomy was further complicated in the context of East London's Xhosa community, due to its specific pre-colonial history, and the impact of colonialism (as has been illustrated). It can be convincingly argued that symbolic and ideological representations of ethnic identity are increasingly emphasised when that particular identity is threatened through the forces of change. Furthermore, differences between different ethnic groupings, or sub-groupings, are often emphasised to a greater degree if the two groupings concerned are in reality relatively similar. These two elements of ethnic identification and mobilisation were implicitly demonstrated in Mayer's work, and further demonstrate the importance of anthropological contributions to the understanding of ethnicity.

Culturally and linguistically Mfengu and Xhosa 'proper' were at the time of Mayer's study very similar. It was the intrusion of colonialism that provoked the sub-cultural/ethnic schism with which Mayer is concerned. Thus in this particular instance, the 'Red' Xhosa's perceived distinctiveness *vis-a-vis* the 'School' Xhosa arose from colonialist appropriation of their territory, and the perceived threat of assimilation into western-oriented values and mores

---

[41] Ibid, p.30.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid, chapter 2.
[44] Ibid, p.31.
[45] Ibid. Here Mayer is referring to M. Gluckman, *Analysis of a Social Change in Modern Zululand*, Manchester, 1958.

(something which was anathema to many 'Red' Xhosa, precisely because of this appropriation of land, and the subsequent rise in status of those Xhosa and Mfengu who 'cooperated' with the colonialists). Mayer also demonstrates that the situation was further complicated in that 'School' Xhosa did not totally abandon traditional Xhosa rites, symbols and customs in their 'turn' to a more European standard of morals and standards. This reinforces Mayer's above mentioned quote which implies that ethnic identification meant more than just economic and social advantage (as was initially gained by the 'School' Xhosa before apartheid entrenched itself), or 'conservative' reaction (which superficially could be interpreted as the reaction of the 'Red' Xhosa). Gulliver echoes Mayer's conclusions in this respect. He argued that it would be a mistake to perceive of cultural factors as purely subsidiary - something which Marxists in the early 1970s would imply - and as only providing an ideology and a set of weapons in 'intertribal' oppositions. 'Symbols of whatever kind though merely representational of more concrete interests, have an autonomy and force of their own'.[46] This is an important observation, for it is suggestive of a form of 'culture-bank' which can be drawn upon in a reformulated manner by ethnic groups seeking to emphasise thier distinctiveness for various reasons, economic or otherwise.

Indeed, this is what distinguished works such as those of Mayer and Gulliver from that of Epstein's 'situationally selective' approach. Epstein, and others who promoted a similar approach, tended to perceive a divide between rural and urban concepts of identity, with (as stated previously) rural areas largely remaining within traditional societal structures. Meanwhile ethnic identities were perceived largely as a response to urbanisation and adjustment to wage labour and the workplace. A prime example of this approach in a West African context is that of Abner Cohen's study of Hausa migrant ethnic identity in Ibadan, western Nigeria in the 1960s.[47] Cohen argued that the success or failure of ethnic identities to endure was directly contingent upon their relative abilities to ensure economic well-being. He did recognise that ethnic organisation entailed aspects of both utility and meaning. 'Political man is also symbolic man'.[48] However, he adheres to the notion that ethnic identity must have a practical function in order to be viable. His 1969 study demonstrated how Hausa migrants to Ibadan succeeded, in a relatively short period of time, in monopolising the cattle trade in the city. The cattle were bought from Hausa traders in Northern Nigeria, and Cohen argues that Hausa migrants monopolised this trade through drawing consciously on ethnic solidarity expressed in the idiom of shared culture. They also strenghened their group identity by joining the orthodox Muslim Tijaniyya order.[49]

---

[46] P. Gulliver, *Tradition and Transition in East Africa*, London, 1969, p.32.
[47] A. Cohen, *Custom and Politics in Urban Africa*, London, 1969.
[48] A. Cohen, *Two-Dimensional Man*, preface, London, 1974.
[49] A. Cohen, *Custom and Politics, passim.*

Cohen's study does provide interesting insights into the relationship between religion and ethnicity, and the gendered nature of ethnic identities. However, the important point to recognise in this context is that the survival of ethnic identities are perceived to be determined in the final analysis by economic factors. In this respect his approach is fundamentally the same as that of the 'Situational Selection' school of thought. This approach can be criticised in two ways. Firstly, it pays little attention to the symbolic aspect of ethnicity, treating this as either irrelevant or as largely contingent upon its utility in securing scarce resources. Gulliver, in the above mentioned quote, perceives symbolic and economic elements as often interacting, but remaining separate (and equally important) spheres. Mayer elaborates this point in his discovery that 'School' Xhosa still retained elements of 'Red' Xhosa custom, which had no bearing whatsoever in their attempts to pursue economic advantage through the appropriation of westernised colonial ideology (although they might have had functions in assuming economic security). Secondly, it fails to account for power differences in the society in question, and the effects of colonial hegemony. This criticism not only applies to Cohen and the Manchester School, but also to Mayer.[50]

This second criticism illustrates how even these anthropological approaches to ethnic identification, despite providing a cogent and powerful critique of the dominant African nationalist paradigm of the time, were still influenced by both it and 'Modernisation' theory. Perhaps the 'Winds of Change' blowing through Africa at the time, with many African states receiving independence, influenced anthropological approaches to ethnicity as well as those of newly independent government administrations. Combined with 'Modernisation' theory, and the prevalent hope in many African states that colonial hegemony was fading into the past, and a bright new future beckoned, it is not surprising that even academic works were influenced by the wave of optimism that accompanied it. Mayer's work presented an alternative interpretation (due in no small part to the existence of the apartheid regime in South Africa), which was suggestive of differing routes to modernity, but even his 1960s work argued for an eventual demise of ethnic affiliations when worker consciousness fully asserted itself.[51]

Later chapters will demonstrate that the 'homelands' policy was in no small measure influential in further reformulating 'ethnic' identities in South Africa, but it is important to recognise that Africans were not passively manipulated in constructing this identity. Sections of South African society (especially from the middle classes) were very much involved in its formation. This hypothesis also holds true for other areas of Southern Africa, and indeed on a global

---

[50] Although many of these anthropologists took power relations fully into account from the late 1970s onwards, providing a more complete analysis of ethnic identities.

[51] Mayer, under the influence of more radical marxian perspectives regarding ethnic identities, later recognised that ideological forms of ethnic affiliation were not going to disappear so easily. See chapter 3 for an analysis of Mayer's later works.

scale. Differing levels of ethnic consciousnesses have existed historically in South Africa. Whereas ethnicity in the earlier part of the twentieth century in South Africa often involved defense of rural resources and an old way of life, it is now also mobilised in competition for new resources and control over new local states. Certainly the 'Red' Xhosa of East London fit into the former category of his analysis. It would seem therefore that the work of the Manchester School, Phillip Mayer, Abner Cohen and other anthropologists of the 1950s and 1960s were working at a time when ethnic mobilisation existed as much in the cultural realm as in a political one, although a shift towards politicised ethnicity was occurring - not least because of the apartheid regime's 'Homelands' policy in the case of South Africa. Some ethnic consciousnesses, such as those of the Zulu, were being reformulated in an explicitly political sense as early as the 1920s.[52] However, this shift occurred in a more systematic manner from the 1960s onwards. The fact that the above mentioned urban anthropologists did not systematically examine this general trend amongst different communities at the time of their initial studies provoked strong critiques from early 1970s Marxist historians. Nevertheless, before examining the sociology of pluralism and these critiques, it is important to recognise that these anthropological works were extremely important in one fundamental sense. For they demonstrated that ethnic mobilisation did not necessarily evolve from elite politicised manipulation, but could also represent the mobilised defense of a particular group's culture and way of life when this was threatened. Ethnic mobilisation could evolve from 'below' as much as from 'above'. They also illustrated that, far from ethnic identification consisting of an irrelevent anachronistic part of the rural African past, soon to die out in the tide of 'progress', ethnic mobilisation could exist and thrive in urban, industrialising contexts. This was due in no small part to its fluid, adaptable nature.

1.3 'Race' and Ethnicity Conflated: The Sociology of Pluralism in the 1960s

The sociology of pluralism reflects many of the tenets of 1950s/1960s urban anthropology, and therefore their separation is partially artificial. Nevertheless, the "situational' approach does distinguish itself in that it promotes the concept of the 'instrumental' nature of ethnic mobilisation, whereas other proponents of the sociology of pluralism often argued that 'primordialist' elements were fundamental in the formation of mobilised ethnic identities. Indeed, the concept of 'primordialism' was fundamental in provoking the later Marxist critique of 1950s/1960s studies of ethnic identities in South Africa.

The sociology of pluralism also represented the first concentrated effort to introduce ethnicity as an appropriate analytical concept for the understanding of South African conditions. The concept of pluralism itself derived from J.S. Furnivall's 1948 work *Colonial Policy and Practice.* This study aimed at generating a conceptual framework for the understanding of tropical

---

[52] See chapter 5.

colonial societies. Furnival argued that these societies, although integrated artificially through a shared economic and political system, were divided by language, culture and religion and therefore their component social groups coexisted uneasily together.[53] Academics such as L. Kuper, M.G. Smith and P. Van den Berghe built upon Furnivall's theoretical approach in a specifically African context. In his 1969 jointly edited work Smith argued that pluralism was a means of understanding conflict in 'a social structure characterised by fundamental discontinuities and cleavages, and a cultural complex based on systematic institutional diversity'.[54] The studies contained in this volume emanated from an interdisciplinary colloquium held at the University of California in 1966, and contributions to the subsequent published edition came from a wide range of academic disciplines, including Sociology, Political Science and History as well as Anthropology. All these contributions promoted the understanding of ethnicity within the theoretical paradigm of pluralism. However, there were significant differences between individual approaches.

Davidson's contribution for example questions whether the concept of 'plural society' (as advocated by Furnivall and Smith) is equally applicable to different periods of Northern Rhodesia's/Zambia's history. He argues that in the early stages of colonialism 'Africans were no more members of Northern Rhodesian society, as recognised by duly enshrined authority, than the cattle and the game for whom reserves were also marked out'.[55] The advantage of Davidson's more historical analysis resides in its recognition that ethnic identities achieve varying degrees of importance in society at different points of time in a society's history.

Nevertheless, pluralism at the time was dominated by the theoretical concepts of Smith, Kuper and Van den Berghe. All three theorists (although differing in some contexts) tended to conflate ethnic identification with 'race', something which earlier anthropologists and biologists such as Huxley and Haddon explicitly attempted to avoid. Smith in particular also seemed to implicitly suggest that ethnic groups were static, whilst reifying culture.[56] This could arguably reinforce the notion of 'separate development' perpetrated by the apartheid state in the South African context, which promulgated the notion that Africans were 'naturally' divided along culturally ethnic lines, and needed to be separated from whites to develop at their own pace. Pluralism therefore provoked vehement ripostes from Marxist historians working in the early 1970s, who perceived divisions in Southern African societies within class, rather than 'race', terms.

---

53 J. Furnivall. *Colonial Policy and Practice*, Cambridge, 1948, *passim.*

54 L Kuper and M.G. Smith, *Pluralism in Africa*, Los Angeles, 1969, p.27.

55 Quote by L. Kuper in L. Kuper and M.G. Smith, *Pluralism*, p.461.

56 See M.G. Smith, 'Institutional and Political Conditions of Pluralism', ibid, p.p.27-30. Also see M.G. Smith, *The Plural Society of the British West Indies*, London, 1965.

1.4 Ethnicity as 'False Consciousness': The Marxist Riposte of the Early 1970s

The strongest Marxist critiques of the 1950s/1960s anthropological interpretations of ethnic identification emerged from expatriate South Africans in the early 1970s. This stemmed specifically from the Nationalist party's 'Homelands' policy, which categorised Africans into 'ethnic groupings' in order to justify exclusion of blacks from urban areas. Old chiefdoms that had partially survived the impact of colonialism and apartheid were reformulated during the 1950s and after in order to supposedly 'legitimise' the existence of 'Homelands', the 'rights' of these 'chiefs' to rule them, and a policy of separate development for blacks.[57] The intention was to subvert the development of African nationalist consciousness and maintain the *status quo* of white domination. The policy was reinforced by a plethora of legislation, in addition to the Bantu Authorities Act, emanating from the apartheid regime in the 1950s and 1960s. Government anthropologists were co-opted into this project, aiming to establish dubious genealogies 'legitimising' the new Tribal Authorities. Funding was very often controlled by the state when anthropological works were carried out in the 'homelands'. This left anthropological studies open to the criticism that they were providing an ideological basis for the apartheid regime's policy of 'separate development', even if this was not in reality the case.

In the early 1970s Magubane was levelling this critique specifically at Mayer's work, which was originally part of a three volume anthropological study. Magubane, in producing this critique, argued that the truly comprehensive understanding 'of social forces in a process of social change requires more than an analysis of the victims of oppression. It requires also the study of the system of domination itself'.[58] This paucity of analysis of the dominating power led Magubane to argue that Mayer *et al* were providng ideological justification for the apartheid 'Homelands' policy. Writing in the same period, Mafeje comments that if tribalism 'is thought of as peculiarly African, then the ideology itself is particularly European in origin'.[59] In broad terms these historians argued that ethnicity was a result of colonial divide and rule tactics. Anthropologists were accused of ideologically reinforcing these policies through their 'preoccupation' with the study of 'tribes', thus suggesting that Africans were divided naturally by 'tribe'.[60]

In one sense, this particular Marxist critique reflected the concepts advocated by 1950s/1960s African Nationalists and advocates of 'modernisation' theory. For all these interpretative

---

[57] This reflected earlier manipulations of remnant chieftaincies in order to bolster the segregationist policies of the 1920s (see later chapters). However, the 'Homelands' policy was much more systematic in its planning and implementation.
[58] B. Magubane, 'The 'Xhosa' in Town Revisited', p.1708.
[59] A. Mafeje.,'The Ideology of 'Tribalism'', *JMAS* Vol 9 No 2, 1971.
[60] See especially B. Magubane, 'The 'Xhosa' in Town' and A. Mafeje, 'The Ideology of 'Tribalism' '.

approaches to ethnicity were teleological in nature. They argued that societies adhered to a process of natural evolutionary modernisation, and that ethnic identifications would eventually fall by the wayside in the inevitable tide of 'progress'. Of course there were differences. 'Modernisation' theorists of the Right and Centre believed fervently that the 'beneficent' forces of economic growth would ensure that ethnic loyalties would disappear, with a new national consciousness taking their place. Marxists also stressed modernisation, although they perceived it in terms of the inevitable emergence of classes through capitalist penetration, with the eventual emergence of a politicised, industrial proletariat which would instigate the change to a socialist, democratic society.

Magubane, Mafeje and others of their intellectual and activist persuasion made considerable use of Marx's concept of 'false consciousness' in explaining the persistence of ethnic identifications. Mafeje argues in his 1971 article that it is 'a mark of 'false consciousness' on the part of the supposed tribesmen, who subscribe to an ideology that is inconsistent with their material base and therefore unwittingly respond to the call for their own exploitation'.[61] They further argue that anthropologists such as Gulliver, Mayer and Mitchell (to mention just three) contributed to the creation of this ideological construct. For example, Mafeje criticises Gulliver for his use of the word 'tribe' in describing the ethnic groupings studied in his edited work (above). Gulliver justified the use of the word by arguing that Africans themselves had no inhibitions in describing themselves as 'tribal'.[62] Mafeje however argues that this reinforces European conceptions of superiority, due to the pejorative attachments adhering to the word 'tribe', especially in terms of its perceived inferior 'evolutionary' stage of development when compared to that of European nation-states.[63] Magubane criticises Mayer for emphasising the 'unessential' rather than the 'essential' qualities of Xhosa society.[64] Magubane was here arguing that, by focussing on every-day cultural aspects of Xhosa life, and 'ignoring' the wider sphere of white domination within which this cultural milieu was situated, Mayer (as with Gulliver's use of the word 'tribe') reinforced European notions of evolutionary superiority, and thus provided ideological justification for apartheid policies of separate development in South Africa.

Considering the consolidation of apartheid in South Africa during the 1960s and early 1970s, and the parallel growth of Marxist historiography, with its emphasis on class consciousness, it is perhaps not surprising that anthropological works received such vehement criticisms. Indeed, some of the criticisms are well-founded. For example, Mayer's study of the Xhosa can indeed be seen to contain a paucity of analysis concerning the nature of apartheid, and its

---

61 A. Mafeje, 'The Ideology of 'Tribalism'', p.259.
62 P. Gulliver, *Tradition and Transition*, p.p.5-8.
63 A. Mafeje, 'The Ideology of 'Tribalism'', *passim.*
64 B. Magubane, 'The 'Xhosa' in Town', p.1708.

effect on Xhosa consciousness, although he corrected this in later works. Nevertheless, Marxian concentration in this period on the importance of class consciousness and class struggle, often in abstract theoretical terms, precluded an understanding of African agency in southern Africa (and elsewhere on the continent). For there were, and are, active African elements from the past that directly influenced the formation of ethnic identities in southern Africa which abstract teleological theories seemed unable to integrate (as they contradict the idea that ethnic identities were atavistic residues fading into the rural past).

In many respects, the anthropological approaches of the 1950s/1960s, and the Marxist riposte of the early 1970s, reflect different aspects of the multi-layered nature of ethnic identifications. The anthropological approaches demonstrate that ethnic mobilisation can emanate from the pre-colonial customs of African societies, which subsequently became threatened under the onslaught of uneven capitalist development and colonial and apartheid ideology. Furthermore, it demonstrates that ethnic identification does not just consist of manipulation by a petty bourgeois elite. The Marxist critique implies that ethnic identifications can emanate from the political sphere, as well as the cultural one. It is also interesting to note that, despite the Marxist concern to repudiate the anthropological approach, there are underlying similarities in some of the conclusions drawn by both. For example, Mafeje makes the following comment in his critique of anthropological studies:

> *A relatively undifferentiated society, practising a primitive subsistence economy and enjoying local autonomy, can legitimately be designated as a tribe. When such a society strives to maintain its basic structure and local autonomy, even under changed economic and political conditions, perhaps it can be said to exhibit 'tribalism'.*[65]

This can be compared to Gulliver's hypothesis of two years earlier:

> *although ... active leaders have certainly encouraged tribal distinctiveness for their own purposes, they have done this for the concomitant purposes (however ill-defined) of the members of their tribal groups and with their willing support. Nor have the leaders created the 'tribes': rather they have made use of them and, for the most part, developed what is for themselves the political and economic advantages of the tribe.*[66]

---

[65] A. Mafeje, 'The Ideology of 'Tribalism'', p.258.

Both Mafeje and Gulliver here acknowledge that ethnic identification does have a 'passive' cultural basis. Despite his general argument, Mafeje even recognises that this cultural base can be mobilised in order to defend identities in times of considerable economic and social change. Therefore, both are in their different ways recognising that ethnic identifications are multi-layered in nature, capable of being reformulated in order to accommodate the socio/economic context of the time.

The difference between the two theoretical approaches lies in the respective emphases placed on the influence of capitalism and colonialism in determining ethnic mobilisation. Mafeje qualifies his above statement by arguing that it is fundamentally flawed to impose this concept of 'tribalism' upon societies effectively penetrated by colonialism, and unevenly entering a capitalist economy and world market. He perceives 'tribalism' in this context to be an invention of petty bourgeois elites manipulating 'tribal' ideology in order to achieve higher status within societies suffering from uneven capitalist 'development'. In South Africa, this is intensified by the 'Homelands' policies of the apartheid regime. That people follow this supposed 'top-down' manipulation is put down to 'false consciousness'. Thus there is no place in Mafeje's theoretical model for ethnic mobilisation from the 'bottom-up' in a newly forming capitalist economy. Gulliver, together with other anthropological approaches, disputes this assumption, as evidenced by his above argument. In effect he argues that elite manipulation of 'tribal' ideology is not such a 'one-way' affair. He argues that the ability for local elites to manipulate this 'tribal' ideology to their own advantage rests on the fact that the concept of 'tribe' rests on a solid, but malleable, foundation.[67] Thus attempts to manipulate people along 'tribal' lines where no cultural basis is available for manipulation is likely to fail.

This seems to be the advantage of the anthropological approaches of the 1950s/60s compared to the Marxist critique of the early 1970s. For they place much more emphasis on Africans as active agents in the formation of ethnic identities. Nevertheless, they did not apply rigorous class analysis to the context of the societies they were studying, and in some cases thier approaches were ahistorical. In pointing to this context, Marxian critiques had value. As the next chapter will demonstrate, class seems to have been one of a number of important missing, or under-analysed, elements in anthropological analyses of ethnic identities. The criticism that anthropologists such as Mayer consciously reinforced apartheid ideology is however a gross misrepresentation of their work, and is really more appropriate when applied to early twentieth century anthropological studies (and perhaps to the unfortunate clumsy conflation of concepts of 'race' and ethnicity by pluralist sociologists such as M.G. Smith).

---

[66] P. Gulliver, *Tradition and Transition*, p.17.
[67] Ibid, p.19-20.

Indeed, the early Marxist critique can in some respects be criticised for being far more patronising towards Africans, in that their abstract teleological view of societal development allowed little room for active Afrcan agency. This was to change in latter years, as Marxian approaches became far more sophisticated, producing much more sympathetic and comprehensive views of African identities, including ethnicity. (Later Marxists also argued that worker consciousness was an ideologically informed category). Nevertheless, the Marxist riposte of the early 1970s, which was very much a product of the political climate of its time, entailed that studies of ethnicity - especially in South Africa - became subordinated to concepts of nationalism and class consciousness. These studies had their own important contributions to make, but the lack of serious studies of ethnic identification, although understandable, was a serious academic omission.

2. DEVELOPING THEORIES OF ETHNICITY, AN OVERVIEW. PART 2: FROM THE EARLY 1970S TO CIRCA 1990.

These two decades saw a fundamental shift in the perceived importance of ethnicity as an area of academic study. Chapter two illustrated how the early 1970s Marxist critique of anthropological and sociological theories of ethnicity centred around the paucity of class analysis contained within these conceptual approaches. This chapter will demonstrate how Marxist analyses developed from this critique, producing a diverse, rich array of theories and case studies which - unlike the Marxist analyses of Mafeje and Magubane mentioned in chapter two - placed considerable emphasis on African agency in constructing ethnic identities. Anthropological works of this period will also be examined, and emphasis will be placed upon how various anthropologists reacted to the 'Marxist riposte'. Mayer's studies will receive particular attention, although other anthropological works will be examined in depth. Social historians, Marxist and non-Marxist alike, attempted to bridge the theoretical divide that this riposte entailed in the early 1980s. Their analyses produced new concepts of ethnic identity, allowing ideological elements more prominence than was the case with earlier, more orthodox Marxist approaches. The mid-1980s also saw a proliferation of academic studies of nationalism which had a considerable influence upon studies of ethnicity including those concerned with southern Africa. These works will also be examined, and their various theoretical hypotheses explored. The chapter ends around the year 1990. This is because academic studies of ethnicity have proliferated considerably since the fall of the Soviet Communist bloc, and the subsequent rise in ethnic nationalisms, conflicts and tensions (although many existed beforehand). Additionally , the ending of the apartheid regime in South Africa has allowed studies of ethnicity to become more commonplace. It would therefore be impossible to survey adequately the burgeoning mass of literature from 1990 onwards in chapter format, and instead post-1990 works will receive individual attention in later chapters where appropriate. As academic literature is often influenced by the political climate of the time, the year 1990 also provides a 'natural' historical fault line in terms of academic theories.

2.1 Marxism and the Vexed Question of Ethnicity: Marxist Theoretical Approaches, c. 1970-1979.

As illustrated, both Anthropology and the Sociology of pluralism were subject to vehement critiques in the early 1970s from Marxist scholars. Legassick also criticised the work of Smith, Kuper and other 'pluralists' in a review of their previously mentioned book, arguing that their analysis explicitly ignored the role of class in the formation of ethnic identities.[68] Many of these criticisms revolved around the 'Primordialist/Instrumentalist' debate concerning ethnic

---

[68] M. Legassick, 'The Concept of Pluralism: A Critique', in C. W. Gutkind and P. Waterman, *African Social Studies: A Radical Reader*, London, 1987, p.47.

and national identities, but assumed a special significance in South Africa due to the apartheid regime's policies of ethnic engineering, especially the 'homelands' policy. This again demonstrates that theories concerning ethnic identification and mobilisation were often contingent in the 1970s (and beyond) upon the political climate existing in South Africa at the time. Ethnicity was being sidelined as a subject of academic study, as it could be perceived to reinforce the policies of the Nationalist party. Authors such as Smith, Kuper and Van den Berghe were seen to pursue an element of primordialism in their various works. Van den Berghe in fact turned to Socio-biology in the late 1970s in order to further pursue his 'Primordialist' hypothesis, and in doing so specifically precluded the possibility of ethnic affiliations articulating with those of class.[69] This separation of class and ethnic affiliations, and the conflation of 'race' and ethnicity which these three 'pluralists' promoted, opened their work up to appropriation by the proponents and apologists for apartheid. For 'primordialist', ascriptive concepts of ethnic identity fitted well with policies of 'separate development'.[70]

This was anathema to Marxist academics and activists in the early 1970s, who equated ethnic mobilisation with 'false consciousness' and 'petty bourgeois' manipulation. It is interesting to note, in passing, that radical academics such as Mafeje considerably altered their own approach to the study of African society in this period. Mafeje had previously conducted anthropological work with Monica Wilson which bore little resemblance to his later more radical Marxist approach.[71] Indeed, it seems reasonable to assume that much academic work in the era of 'Grand Apartheid' was shaped by political factors, with academics across a range of disciplines criticising each others' work not so much for its academic content, but rather as regards its possible appropriation by the apartheid regime. This was particularly the case with the vexed question of ethnic affiliation. The conflation of 'race' and ethnicity by Pluralist theorists, and the (falsely) perceived taint of apartheid clinging to anthropological works such as that of Mayer, ensured that the study of ethnic identities received scant attention amongst radical South African scholars in the early 1970s, with the primary debate shifting to whether the fundamental division in South African society was one of 'race' or class.

The area of debate fundamentally shifted, however, in the aftermath of the 1976 Soweto uprisings, the revival of *Inkatha*, and the continuing relevance of ethnic identifications throughout post-colonial sub-Saharan Africa. Radical scholars began to dominate the intellectual arena after these series of events. They eventually provided a series of sophisticated analyses of ethnic identities within South Africa, which aimed to demonstrate how these identities articulated with class. However, it was first necessary to recognise that

---

[69] See for example P. Van den Berghe, 'Race and Ethnicity: A Sociobiological Perspective,', in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol 1, No 4, 1978. p.p..402-411. Also P. Van Den Berghe, 'Does Race Matter?', *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol 1, No 3, 1995.

[70] For further elaboration see for example the following: S. Dubow, 'Ethnic Euphemisms and Racial Echoes', *JSAS*, Vol 20, No 3, 1994 and S. Bekker, *Ethnicity in Focus*, Natal, 1993.

[71] M. Wilson and A. Mafeje, *Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township*, Oxford, 1963.

ethnicity represented more than just 'false consciousness', and thus Marxists went through a period of painful theoretical adjustment in order to fully accommodate the phenomenon of ethnic consciousness within their theoretical paradigms.

John Saul was one of the first academics who recognised the need to adjust the more rigid elements of class analysis advocated by earlier Marxist works vis-à-vis ethnicity. He offered an alternative interpretation of its nature. Writing in 1979, he argued that Marxists need to engage with concepts of ethnicity in a more theoretically rigorous fashion, and not just dismiss it as a form of 'false consciousness'. He further comments that this is necessary in order to counter 'primordialist' forms of interpretations, which stress the perceived importance of ethnic affiliations in African societies and underplay class analyses.[72] The need for a more theoretically rigorous approach was especially apparent in South Africa, considering the policy of 'separate development' pursued by the apartheid regime which was based on the premise that Africans were fundamentally 'tribal' by nature (thus ideologically justifying forced 'removals' and the creation of 'Homelands'). Utilising concepts originating from Structural and Post-Structural Marxists such as Althusser and Laclau, Saul dismisses Mafeje's concept of ethnicity as representing either 'false consciousness' or colonial ideology and nothing else. He develops Althusser's theory that ideology does not distort reality (as indicated by radical Marxists such as Mafeje) but produces it, or at least what people perceive as reality. He also bases his approach on Laclau's hypothesis regarding conflict in capitalist societies: 'Running through capitalist societies there is, in addition to the class contradiction, a second contradiction...that between 'power bloc' and 'people'. The first contradiction is the sphere of class struggle; the second, that of popular-democratic struggle'. [73]

He then develops this hypothesis with specific reference to ethnicity, arguing that the ideological terrain created by the uneven development of capitalism results in simultaneous class contradictions, and 'centre-periphery' contradictions. Both 'Third World' nationalism and ethnic identifications are perceived by Saul to emanate from this latter contradiction. This approach can be criticised in several respects, as will become apparent. It is important to acknowledge, however, that Saul was evolving a much more sophisticated theoretical model for analysing ethnic identifications than earlier marxian approaches, allowing for African agency in their formulations which did not entirely emanate from colonial interventions or indigenous lower middle class manipulations. This is due to his stress upon what he terms 'popular-democratic' struggle. He also recognises that the emotional power of ethnic mobilisation can be a more powerful uniting force than anti-colonial nationalism: 'For ethnicity

---

[72] J. Saul, *The State and Revolution in Eastern Africa*, London, 1979, p.p.391-2. Saul specifically refers to the work of the political scientist, Henry Bienen, who refutes the salience of class analysis in African societies.
[73] Ibid, p.p.400-1.

can often draw upon much more proximate and recognisable ingredients - language, symbols, ties of kin, both real and imagined - in defining itself and recruiting 'subjects".[74]

Saul demonstrates considerable eclecticism in developing his theory, borrowing from non-Marxist works as well as Althusser and Laclau. This does seem to allow him to overcome partially the somewhat mechanistic, dismissive approach of earlier Marxist studies. His use of Cynthia Enloe's conceptualisations concerning ethnic mobilisation is particularly interesting, as it allows him to further his hypothesis - initiated by his use of Laclau's theories - that ethnic mobilisation need not be an entirely negative phenomenon. Indeed, he argues that it can have very positive aspects. As Saul states, Enloe 'is not prepared to accept uncritically the negative judgement pronounced upon ethnicity by commentators from either the Marxist or modernisation schools of approach'.[75] Enloe's argument that ethnic political mobilisation can be utilised to defend communal interests is itself used by Saul in a specific manner. He integrates her hypotheses with his more abstract usage of Laclau's theory (which was not specifically concerned with ethnicity). Saul shows particular interest in her argument that nation states are not the sole end realities in terms of political development, and that the exploitative nature of many postcolonial nation states make ethnic mobilisation an attractive alternative.[76]

Enloe draws her conclusions largely from the ethnic assertions of North American blacks and Native American peoples in the 1960s and 1970s. She comments that politicians, development planners and social scientists alike have inextricably intertwined modernity, development and nationalism within their theories of social and economic development.

> *(O)bservers see ethnic groups to be significant mainly as they relate to the larger community. The nation-state becomes the point of reference. Therefore before long, the scientific observ -er joins the central policy maker in perceiving ethnic phenomena as problems - that is, as challenges to the integration of some larger system.*[77]

She views the process of assimilation to the requirements of the nation-state as repressive and coercive in terms of policies towards non-dominant ethnic groups within the boundaries of many nation-states. Ethnic politicisation and mobilisation to protect ethnic communal interests, as set against this coercive assimilation policy, are argued to be positive both in

---

[74] Ibid, p.401.
[75] Ibid, p.407.
[76] Ibid, p.p.407-8.
[77] C. Enloe, *Ethnic Conflict and Political Development*, London, 1986 (1st ed 1973), p.p.6-7.

terms of building individual and collective self-esteem, and defending communal interests. This political mobilisation of ethnicity also demonstrates that ethnic affiliations are not atavistic residues of prior primordial attachments requiring assimilation into the wider nationalist consciousness. Rather they can be remarkably resilient, flexible, fluid forms of identity which are progressive, democratic and do not run counter to development.[78] In this, she runs counter to many developmental theorists of the time, who viewed ethnic identities as counter-productive to development.

Whilst criticising Enloe for a paucity of class analysis, Saul utilises her argument in order to further Marxist analysis of ethnic identities beyond the concept of ethnicity as 'false consciousness'. He integrates Enloe's argument with Laclau's hypothesis that capitalist countries contain a second contradiction, that of 'power bloc' and 'people'. Ethnic mobilisation in his conceptualisation fits with the latter contradiction. This also allows him to argue for the appropriation of ethnic mobilised identities within the class struggle, assimilating elements of the former in order to strengthen the latter and make socialism more relevant to the people concerned.

The idea that ethnic mobilisation can have positive aspects had precedents in academia, as illustrated in chapter two. Epstein's 'Situational Selection' approach, Cohen's study of migrant Hausa usage of ethnic identities, and Mayer's conceptualising of the Xhosa 'Red/School' cleavage all, in varying degrees, emphasised positive aspects through their anthropological studies. However, these works were more concerned with social change than political mobilisation. Nevertheless, it was Saul's acceptance of the positive potential of ethnic mobilisation that differentiated his work from earlier Marxist approaches. Communal resistance to colonial land expropriation in early twentieth century South Africa often translated itself in a reformulated ethnic sense, demonstrating that mobilised ethnic identities could be fluid, flexible and 'popular democratic' in form.[79] Saul further argues that this 'popular-democratic' struggle should be integrated within the class struggle in order to avoid a degeneration into divisive 'tribal' politics.[80]

However, there were aspects to Saul's conceptual approach which were equally as teleological and reductionist as either the 'Modernisation' school or Marxists such as Mafeje. This was due to a large extent - as with many theories regarding ethnic identities - to the specific historical and political climate within which Saul was working, as well as his radical political persuasions. Saul also betrays a certain cultural bias in his work. For example, he

---

[78] Ibid. Introduction and Conclusion.

[79] See later chapters, and especially chapter 3 for a theoretical development of this theme.

[80] J. Saul, *The State and Revolution*, p.409. This suggests that ethnicity can take several different forms, both divisive and liberatory. Again,the multiple levels of ethnic affiliations, and their contradictory elements, are explored further in chapter 3.

still treats ethnicity as a type of 'transitional' stage which is to be manipulated in order to promote a socialist revolution. Indeed, he refers to Frelimo's approach to ethnicity in this context.[81] As in the case of proponents of the nationalist paradigm, his theory promotes an exclusive claim to 'objective' truth, and the ultimate progression of society to a pure state of socialism. Therefore any aspects of ethnic identification that do not seem to be 'positive' or conducive to the socialist society which Saul perceives as the final stage in political development, are criticised as atavistic and irrelevant. For example he criticises elements of ethnic identification for promoting 'cramped and debilitating ritual and spiritual perspectives... (and)...excessive preoccupation with such 'side issues' as the sanctity of language...'.[82] Words such as 'cramped', 'debilitating', and 'excessive' are loaded with subjective, judgmental undertones which ignore the very real meanings these practices have for various peoples. Lonsdale's criticism of earlier Marxian concepts of 'false consciousness' vis-à-vis ethnic affiliations is equally applicable to Saul's, admittedly more sophisticated, approach: The defect of this analysis was that its theoreticians assumed they knew so much better than the people who were most intimately involved, but who had the misfortune not to be academics possessed of a theory of history.[83]

Again, the historical and political context in which Saul was writing is of crucial importance in understanding this approach. The mid to late 1970s were a time of great expectations for socialist scholars and political activists. The Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola had achieved independence in 1975, due to the fall of Salazar's regime in a 1974 coup and the armed resistance of radical Marxist guerrilla movements. Zimbabwe was also to achieve independence in 1980, under what seemed then to be a socialist oriented government. All these governments had attempted to radicalise the peasantry during the course of their struggles against colonialism, and therefore had to address the issue of ethnic affiliations.[84] Therefore Saul was writing at a time when it seemed possible that some African countries were on the verge of achieving a truly socialist state. For example, he comments that Frelimo was successfully achieving 'a genuine 'fusion' of diverse aspects of the cultures and 'popular traditions' of Mozambique into a novel national and revolutionary form'.[85] Thus Saul conceived of ethnic affiliations as potentially positive in that they supposedly centred around a type of 'power bloc - people' contradiction, due to the exploitative nature of capitalism and colonialism, and that this positive aspect was available for co-optation into the socialist project. Any aspect

---

[81] Ibid, p.p.416-9.

[82] Ibid, p.414.

[83] J. Lonsdale, 'Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism', in *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Occasional Paper No 11, International Development Studies, Roskilde, Denmark, 1994, p.135.

[84] There is a burgeoning literature on the issue of how far the peasantries of the various countries concerned were radicalised during the course of these struggles. See for example, D. Birmingham and P. Martin, *History of Central Africa Vol .2*, London, 1992; T. Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe*, London, 1985; L. White, 'The Revolution Ten Years On', in *JSAS* Vol 11, No 2, 1985.

[85] J. Saul, *The State and Revolution*, p.418.

of ethnic affiliation which did not integrate with this concept of co-optation was deemed atavistic and reactionary. Saul does not fully investigate what ethnic identifications meant to the people affiliated to them, and dismisses those which don't fit in with his concept of the ideal society. For this he is to be criticised.

Saul also fails to address other aspects of ethnic identification. For example, he situates ethnic mobilisation within a theoretical paradigm which ultimately aims at democracy. He perceives ethnic affiliations to originate from 'centre-periphery' contradictions, due to the exploitative nature of colonialism and capitalism, and that these movements are 'inevitably' projecting themselves towards a democratic future, in direct opposition to this exploitation, unless they are appropriated by 'tribalist' oriented politicians pursuing their own political agenda. Therefore, these ethnic movements are readily available for socialist co-optation. This precludes the possibility (since proven) that ethnic affiliations may well not be part of a 'popular-democratic' struggle (although they can be). Saul seems constantly to be looking for evidence of popular grassroots democracy, which precludes other root causes of ethnic mobilisation. This seems due in no small measure to his insistence upon teleological theories concerning societies. The spirit of optimism existing in parts of southern Africa in the mid to late 1970s reinforced this approach. In addition, his theoretical paradigm precludes the possibility of 'periphery-periphery' contradictions, concentrating solely as he does upon 'centre-periphery' ones. This again does not allow for a full comprehensive analysis of the nature of ethnic identification, as will become apparent in later chapters. The ultimate fault of Saul's approach is that he does not take into account the various consciousnesses of the people mobilised by ethnic affiliations; he only perceives of these affiliations as prototypical democratic movements readily available for integrating into the struggle for a wider socialist democracy. Nevertheless, Saul's approach signified a sea-change in Marxist historiography with respect to ethnicity, and placed the study of the phenomena firmly on the radical agenda, even if it was to take the ending of apartheid in order for it to become a significant factor in radical South African historical studies.

2.2 Anthropology in Crisis: Anthropological Approaches to Ethnicity During the 1970s, With Specific Reference to Southern Africa.

Chapter two has demonstrated that anthropological studies of ethnicity underwent considerable criticism in South Africa during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s for their supposed ideological underpinning of the apartheid regime (indeed, many government sponsored anthropological projects did have this objective). Anthropology was also receiving more general criticisms from various academic quarters from the 1960s onwards, especially with regard to its ahistorical approach and its failure to completely integrate political economy into

its societal analyses. Nevertheless, it is important not to overstate the case. Various anthropologists, such as the Comaroffs (see below), and Colin Murray had re-routed anthropology in a radically different direction, taking fully into account aspects of political economy and providing comprehensive critiques of the apartheid state within a historical context.[86]

The widespread scholarly antagonism towards some anthropological research in South Africa was partially due to Afrikaner nationalist anthropological studies. Afrikaans universities at the time approached ethnic identities in a specific way, referred to these studies as *Volkekunde* ('the study of cultures'). This approach had its ideological roots in idealist, ultra-primordialist German anthropological theories pre-dating the Second World War. Sharp comments that this approach conceptualises ethnic groups as cultural isolates, sharing 'a common language, system of knowledge, social structure, political and military structure, legal system, economy, educational system, games and technical and art forms.'[87] Ethnic groups were thus conceived of as a *volk*, or emerging nation, an hypothesis that fitted easily with policies of 'separate development'. Sharp summarises the fragmented situation of anthropology in South Africa at the end of the 1970s thus:

> *South African anthropology does not present a uniform front...*
> *Those who claim to be 'volkekundiges' evince...a strong conservative tendency; contemporary social anthropologists within South Africa have a tradition of political liberalism...*
> *Those within South Africa who profess a radical anthropology can be counted on the fingers of one hand.*[88]

The work of Phillip Mayer in the mid to late 1970s demonstrates how some anthropologists attempted to respond to this radical critique. His work is also worth analysing in some detail as it demonstrates that Sharp was incorrect when he argued that 'social anthropology is as compromised as *volkekunde* in respect of ideological subservience to the state'.[89] In the 1970s and early 1980s structural functionalism's dominance of the anthropological discipline was being challenged by neo-Marxist anthropological analysis. Previous to the development of this theoretical paradigm, anthropological Marxism had been somewhat hampered 'by the poverty of the material which Marx had used to construct his evolutionary sequencing in the

---

[86] See for example C. Murray, *Families Divided: The Impact of Migrant Labour in Lesotho*, Cambridge, 1981; J. Comaroff, 'Chiefship in a South African Homeland: A Case Study of the Tshidi Chiefdom of Bophuthatswana', *JSAS*, Vol 1, No 1, 1974.
[87] J. Sharp, 1980, p.5, quoting Kies 1978.
[88] J. Sharp, 1980, p 3.
[89] Sharp originally made this criticism at a 1980 conference held in Manchester. It is recorded in T. Ranger and C. Murray's introduction to *JSAS*, Vol 8, No 1, 1981.

mid-nineteenth century, in which 'modes of production' inexorably succeeded one another'.[90] The inability of orthodox Marxists to integrate Marx's concepts satisfactorily within the context of the so-called 'Third World' earned them considerable disrepute by the 1970s. The problem was that many societies 'especially but not exclusively in Africa, were and sometimes still are organised not around economic relationships, but on the basis of kinship and marriage'.[91] The advantage of the neo-Marxist approach was that it moved away from mono-causal economic determinism, and towards concepts of interdependencies between institutions and relationships in society. These approaches 'were willing to accept, for example, that labour may be organised within kinship groups, without insisting that such labour co-operation must define kinship'.[92]

Of course, Anthropology had developed approaches that diverged considerably from the structural functionalist paradigm well before the arrival of neo-Marxism on the theoretical scene. The work of the 'Manchester School', discussed in chapter two, had already emphasised the 'situational' nature of some ethnic identifications. Anthropologists such as Gluckman and the Wilsons were questioning its ahistorical approach, and its paucity of analysis concerning conflict and change, as early as the 1940s and 1950s.[93] However, the work of the 'Manchester School' never penetrated South African anthropology to any significant degree, and the pioneering work of Gluckman and the Wilsons was never built upon. Mayer's studies were virtually the sole exception, in that they also promoted facets of the 'situational' approach, and even improved upon them by implicitly taking into account rural aspects of ethnicity.

The theoretical shift in Mayer's approach between the publishing of his second edition of *Townsmen or Tribesmen* in 1971, and his edited publication *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society* published in 1980, reflects the shift towards neo-Marxist analysis. Mayer's contribution to his 1980 work is essentially a continuation of his study of the 'Red'/'School' Xhosa cleavage which he identified in 1961. The later study however, demonstrates considerable changes in the way Mayer has approached the subject. For example, he provides a much more in-depth historical perspective of the cleavage than previously, and locates much more of his analysis in the countryside. He also utilises the theoretical insights of Althusser.[94] Thus Mayer, at least on the surface, seemed to be shifting towards a more Marxist analysis of sub-cultural/ethnic identities than was previously the case. This was no

---

[90] A. Cheater, *Social Anthropology: An Alternative Introduction*, London,1989, p.29.

[91] Ibid, p.30. For a detailed discussion of the switch from orthodox to neo-Marxism within Anthropology, also see A. Cheater, *Social Anthropology*, p.p.28-34.

[92] Ibid, p.p.30-32.

[93] See M. Gluckman, *Analysis of a Social Situation in Modern Zululand*, Manchester, 1958 and G. and M. Wilson, *The Analysis of Social Change: Based on Observations in Central Africa*, Cambridge, 1968 (3rd ed, 1st ed 1945).

[94] P. Mayer, *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society*, Cape Town, 1980, p.p.3-4and p.72.

doubt due at least largely to the Marxist 'riposte' mentioned in chapter two. In fact Mayer consulted radical scholars in the drafting of his study. For example Peires, a committed radical activist and scholar, had been consulted concerning the historical context of the cleavage.[95]

It is interesting to note that Marxist analyses of ethnicity, as evidenced by the work of Saul, were utilising works such as Althusser at the same time as anthropologists such as Mayer. Both studies used these neo-marxist insights in attempting to explain the ability of ethnic affiliations to survive urbanisation and industrialisation. Additionally, what both studies attempted was to integrate the subjective consciousnesses of the historical actors concerned regarding ethnic identities. However, the need to integrate people's own perceptions of ethnic identity was nothing new to Mayer. His 1961 work (see chapter two) demonstrated this to no small degree, and in 1975, whilst still working within the liberal scholarly paradigm, Mayer made the following comment: 'So far, at least in the South African context, topics like race, class, and ethnicity have been discussed without systematic attention being paid to the subjective angle, the people's own perceptions. It seems a major omission.'[96] This concern to recognise subjective consciousnesses is still evident in his 1980 work, despite the turn to a more Marxian analysis.

Indeed, the very persistence of ethnic identities within southern Africa entailed eclectic approaches from scholars of several different disciplines and political persuasions, especially with regard to people's own subjective understandings of ethnic identity. There was, however, still an underlying assumption that these forms of ethnic affiliations would eventually disappear as urbanisation, proletarianization and democratic nationalist movements grew. Saul, as has been illustrated, perceived ethnic identities as prototypical bases for the development of wider nationalist, democratic, socialist movements; Mayer argued that both 'Red' and School' sub-cultural/ethnic ideologies were in decline by 1978, due to the effects of industrialisation;[97] others, such as the political activist/scholar Neville Alexander, pursued the hypothesis that ethnic mobilisations in South Africa were due to the policies of 'separate development' formulated by the Nationalist party, which would disappear if a radical working class socialist consciousness could be constructed (in itself, an advocation of ideology imposed from 'above').[98] The difference between Alexander's analysis, and that of Saul, is that Alexander - due to his perception that ethnic affiliations were solely due to Nationalist party ideological manipulation - cannot accept the possibility pursued by Saul that ethnic affiliations are

---

[95] Ibid, p.72.

[96] P. Mayer, 'Class, Status and Ethnicity as Perceived by Johannesburg Africans', in L. Thompson and J. Butler (eds), *Change in Comtemporary South* Africa, London and Los Angeles, 1975, p.142.

[97] P. Mayer, *Black Villagers*, p.39.

[98] N. Alexander, *Sow the Wind: Contemporary* Speeches, Braamfontein, 1985, p.46 and p.p.55-56.

available for co-optation into the socialist project. Nevertheless, Alexander does accept (somewhat paradoxically) that ethnic affiliations are part of the subjective consciousnesses of black South Africans, and therefore should not be dismissed as merely some form of Mafeje-type 'false consciousness'.[99]

The idea that ethnic affiliations would inevitably 'die out' eventually - either through the processes of 'modernisation' as argued by Mayer, or through the evolution of socialist-based societies as posited by Marxian scholars - can be seen in hindsight to be a rather premature conclusion.[100] Nevertheless, the need to recognise and accept the subjective nature of ethnic consciousness was firmly on the agenda of most scholars by the 1980s. The advantage that Mayer's anthropological approach has over those more Marxist in orientation is that it does not perceive ethnic affiliations as either some form of precursor to class formation, or an ideological construction from above by elite groups of intellectuals. He is virtually unique in the 1970s in positing (in an indirect manner) the assumption that ethnic identities can exist on multiple levels, both in a 'passive' cultural form, and an 'active', dynamic political form. Mayer thus presaged the work of many later radical scholars.

It is also questionable whether Mayer whole-heartedly reformulated his theoretical approach in the wake of the Marxist critiques of the early 1970s. For example, he had always perceived 'Red' ideology as a form of resistance to colonialism, apartheid and proletarianisation as evidenced in *Townsmen or Tribesmen.* Furthermore, the introduction of Althusserian neo-Marxist analysis does not seem to have significantly altered his conclusions from this earlier work. He had evolved a more comprehensive historical analysis, thus negating some of the criticisms of Magubane. However, he still situated his work very much in the context of people's subjective understandings of ethnic identities. Webster, in his review of Mayer's 1980 edited work, criticises Mayer for conceptual confusion:

> *In it, Mayer refers to 'folk cultures', when he began writing about 'two rural resistance ideologies'. The confusion, or at least lack of conceptual clarity about the difference between culture and ideology is serious; it is unclear as to whether the two are seen as synonymous, or whether they are to be regarded as a form of false consciousness, or two manifestations of class consciousness as clear, articulate forms of resistance to capitalist penetration of the country-side.*[101]

---

[99] Ibid, p.141.
[100] This is explored in greater depth in later chapters.
[101] D. Webster, 1981, p.p.139-140.

However, rather than this being an example of conceptual confusion, it is an early recognition of the multiple layers of meaning attached to ethnic identifications, which can operate simultaneously in any given situation. The 'folk cultures' can be taken to represent the cultural 'passive' basis of the sub-ethnicities in question, and the ideological context (and indeed, the 'Red'/'School' cleavage itself) can be perceived as a form of ethnic 'moral debate' regarding the best way to engage with exploitation and urbanisation. Webster claims this 'confusion' is due to the eclectic approach of Mayer, acknowledging as he does the supposed influence of such as Althusser, Gellner, Mannheim and Shils.[102] However, Mayer was much less influenced by these academics than he claims. It would seem possible that - apart from the accepted need to provide a more comprehensive historical analysis, and more attention paid to political economy - Mayer had continued largely with the approach initiated in his 1961 work.

Furthermore, this approach, far from detracting from a more comprehensive analysis of ethnicity, actually provides more lucid insights into African people's subjective consciousnesses than many Marxist interpretations of the time. In fact, Webster himself provides a similar conceptualisation of the multiple layered nature of ethnicity in a later work.[103] The neo -Marxist 'turn' towards a less economic determinist approach enabled Mayer to appropriate its tenets. This possibly provided his work with more academic credibility. Meanwhile, the contribution of Anthropology to southern African studies in general was undergoing a crisis.

2.3 Ethnicity on the Agenda: Marxian Scholarship, Consociationalism and the Subjective Nature of Ethnicity.

The crisis of Anthropology in southern African studies during the 1970s received due academic attention in September 1980, with a conference held at Manchester, England.[104] One of the main items on the agenda was to examine the problems faced by Anthropology, and to look for ways forward from this impasse. The meeting itself was attended by anthropologists and historians, from both liberal and radical political backgrounds. The organisers originally planned that a joint discussion between scholars of both disciplines would entail history coming 'to the rescue of anthropology'.[105] However, as Ranger and Murray state,

---

[102] D. Webster, 1981, p.140.

[103] See D. Webster, 'Ethnicity and Gender in a KwaZulu Border Community', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, 1991.

[104] For a discussion of the main points of this conference, and for papers which emanated from it, see *JSAS* Vol 8 1981. This is not to suggest that this conference was the first to recognise the problems faced by the Anthropological discipline, but it does represent one of the most interesting discussions concerning the issue in the southern African context.

[105] T. Ranger and C. Murray, 'Introduction', ibid, p.2.

this expectation proved simplistic: 'So far from being a debate between two disciplines, or from being a magnanimous rescue of one discipline by the other, the conference developed into a joint exploration of common problems and their possible remedies'.[106]

A particularly interesting paper presented at the conference vis-à-vis ethnicity was that produced by the South African historian William Beinart. This study attempted to integrate the insights of anthropologists such as Mayer, with the perspectives of radical historiography. Beinart argues in this work that the categories identified 'by anthropologists such as Mayer deserve serious consideration from historians, for the tradition within which he works is sensitive to the way that people talk about themselves'.[107] At the conference itself Beinart commented that the work of Monica Hunter, (later Wilson), 'almost begins to make the people subjects of their own history'.[108] Beinart's own particular training as an historian perhaps explains this integrative approach. His postgraduate career was pursued under the auspices of Shula Marks at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. Marks emphasised African initiatives in the making of South African society to a greater degree than the neo-Marxist analysts of capital and state such as Wolpe. This emphasis is clearly evidenced in her own work regarding Zulu ethnic consciousness as early as 1977.[109] Beinart's own work reflects much of this emphasis, particularly concerning rural African consciousness. This approach perhaps made him inclined to view the work of Mayer, with whom he also had considerable contact, in a more positive light than scholars such as Mafeje, Magubane and Alexander. Beinart also produced a paper for Mayer's 1980 edited work, although he was not personally involved in the Chamber of Mines' sponsored study from which the work emanated.[110]

Beinart makes several important observations regarding ethnic identifications in this article, especially regarding the relationships between ethnic consciousness and violence, migrant labour, chieftaincy and political economy. Similarly to Mayer, he also demonstrates that ethnic consciousness could work at several levels, linking the violence in Qumbu district, Transkei at the beginning of the twentieth century (with which his article is concerned) directly to the political ethnic mobilisation of earlier rural consciousnesses:

> *Political action, including strategic use of violence, and consciousness also remained embedded in pre-colonial*

---

106 Ibid.

107 W. Beinart,'Conflict in Qumbu: Rural Consciousness, Ethnicity and Violence in the Colonial Transkei', in W. Beinart and C. Bundy (eds), *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa*, London, 1987 (but originally published in the edition of *JSAS* mentioned immediately above).

108 Quoted in the introduction to *JSAS*, Vol 8, No 1, 1981, p.5.

109 S. Marks, 'Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation', in *JSAS*, Vol 4, No 1, 1977. The work of Marks vis-à-vis ethnicity will be examined in greater depth in chapter 5.

110 P. Mayer, *Black Villagers*, p.ix, preface.

> *forms; the political processes and popular ideology surrounding the chieftaincy were of particular importance in the colonial period. It was through the chief that people conceived of their rights to land and access to communal resources.*[111]

This was not to suggest that Beinart presumed these identities to exist in some primordial stasis. Rather he aimed to discover the changing 'form and trajectory of rural popular movements in the district without losing sight of the cultural roots and symbols of the communities in which they were based'.[112] This is highly suggestive of former, more 'passive', cultural identities articulating with politicised, mobilised, dynamic identities arising in response to the changing political climate and form of colonial exploitation. The similarities to Mayer are considerable, although much more firmly based in an historical context. The emphasis on African agency in the mobilisation of ethnic identities was pursued further by Beinart in a 1982 work. Beinart here utilised a 'life-history' approach which lucidly demonstrated how ethnic, class and nationalist consciousness could all articulate without any clear-cut distinction between them.[113] Beinart thus placed ethnic identifications within their own subjective milieu, avoiding the teleological assumptions of such as Saul. He also situated his work firmly within an analysis of political economy and historical context, thus avoiding the short-comings of Mayer. African agency was placed firmly on the agenda.

Other participants at the conference also made stimulating contributions regarding the state of anthropology. Mafeje interestingly argued that, while he no longer considered himself an anthropologist, a sensitive anthropological dimension was still required in South African historical studies. Ranger and Murray also record that, at the end of his presentation, he 'noted somewhat mysteriously ...that "a difference is discernible between those radicals who have a background in anthropology and those who lack it"'.[114] This suggests that Mafeje perhaps still saw mileage in the insights that the anthropological discipline offered. Additionally, it implies that Mafeje did not adhere so strictly to the radical Marxist assumptions vis-à-vis ethnicity which he so vehemently advocated in the early 1970s. Beinart has noted that Mafeje was already positing some sensitive observations with regard to the relationship between class and ideology by 1975, which were 'not as dismissive of forms of consciousness

---

[111] W. Beinart and C. Bundy, *Hidden Struggles*, p.p.108-109.

[112] Ibid, p.109.

[113] W. Beinart, 'Worker Consciousness, Ethnic Particularism and Nationalism: The Experiences of a South African Migrant, 1930-1960', in S. Marks and S. Trapido, *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa.* London, 1993. For the historiographical importance of this approach, and its historical development in the southern African context, see B. Bozzoli and P. Delius, 'Introduction', in B. Bozzoli and P. Delius (eds), *Radical History Review, Special Edition,* Vols 46/7, 1991.

[114] Quoted in intro. to *JSAS*, Vol 8, No 1, 1981, p.4.

which seem(ed) to fail in expressing directly class positions'.[115] Indeed Mafeje could well have been recognising the value of his earlier anthropological research, such as the joint venture he undertook with Monica Wilson in the early 1960s which was more in the liberal anthropological tradition, but making wide use of materialist class analysis within that paradigm. This study,[116] as with Mayer's works, provides a diverse array of examples regarding how social categories such as gender, age and kinship interact with ethnic affiliations. It is also interesting to note that Mayer provided personal assistance in the initial stages of this research, something that might well have been anathema to the Mafeje of 1971.[117]

All this is highly suggestive of the fact that, by the early 1980s, both History and Anthropology were searching for new ways to interpret the continuing survival of ethnic affiliations. There is also an interesting parallel between the debates raging amongst different academics and the hostilities felt between some ethnic groups themselves. Hostilities between ethnic groups often appear at their most vehement, with each group insisting on its own 'uniqueness', at exactly the time when the groups in question are in reality very similar. So it seems with the debate with regard to Anthropology. For, as has been illustrated, both liberal anthropologists and radical historians (not to mention historians from the liberal corner) were working towards similar theoretical reformulations of ethnicity (although in different contexts) at the exact moment that they were most vehemently dismissing the academic credibilities of each other. Of course, the particular nature of the South African regime of the time played a very important role in this division. However, the division was not confined to South Africa, and one can't help thinking that academics were attempting to forge distinctive theoretical identities at the time when many of their assumptions were in fact quite similar.

These debates also demonstrated the recognition by academics that ethnicity was not simply going to 'die out' (although the debate with regard to liberal anthropology's credibility had considerably wider concerns as well). The events of Soweto had initially caused radical historians to focus on class and race as major divisive factors in South African society, whereas liberal and conservative political scientists turned to the literature on ethnicity emanating from the United States. Liberal political scientists had come to the conclusion that, far from there being an evolutionary progression towards a common society, an assumption commonly held by liberal scholars of various academic disciplines until Soweto, South Africa was actually a deeply divided heterogenous country, in terms of ethnic and cultural cleavages. Furthermore, they argued that this 'pluralist' society was divided further by the centralised nature of white minority government.[118] Liberal and conservative political scientists thus

---

115 W. Beinart and C. Bundy, *Hidden Struggles*, p.131.
116 M. Wilson and A. Mafeje, *Langa.*
117 Ibid, p.ix preface.
118 For a discussion of this change in the liberal approach, see S. Bekker, *Ethnicity in Focus*, Natal, 1993, p.p.71-77.

advocated consociationalist forms of 'power-sharing', in order to move away from the Westminster-style parliamentary system in South Africa. Glazer and Moynihan, United States-based social scientists who had been working in the field of ethnic studies for several years, were - indirectly - very influential in reformulating the liberal/conservative approach in the aftermath of Soweto. They argued that there had been a pronounced and sudden increase in tendencies 'by people in many countries and in many circumstances to insist on the significance of their group distinctiveness and identity and on new rights that derive from this character'.[119] In terms of the influence on South African liberal and conservative academics, it was the former's argument that these reformulations often occurred within a milieu of unequal state allocation of resources, with one ethnic group dominating control of the state and the rest competing unequally for the said resources, that was to have the greatest impact.[120] For this provided the theoretical justification for federal, consociational forms of power-sharing, in direct contrast to the democratic nationalism of such as the African National Congress (ANC).

Marxian scholars argued that the divisive character of South African society was in the final analysis based on class, rather than ethnic, divisions, and although ethnicity itself did not become a significant field of research within radical scholarship until the 1990s, there were some seminal studies produced which argued that ethnic affiliations were not 'primordial', and articulated with class and other identities. Beinart's work is one example. This was followed by a collection of studies specifically concerned with ethnicity in Southern Africa, emanating from a conference held in 1983 at the University of Virginia.

This set of works[121], edited by Leroy Vail, has been portrayed as a significant reformulation of radical historiography's approach to the vexed question of ethnicity.[122] It echoes Glazer and Moynihan's hypothesis in so far as it generally portrays more contemporary ethnic movements as politicised, and significantly different from earlier forms of ethnic consciousness.[123] However Vail, who attempted to draw the various contributions contained in the collection within a coherent theoretical framework, still argues in the final analysis for the primacy of class, rather than ethnic, identification *per se*, in determining the form that twentieth century ethnic movements took in southern Africa.[124] It is important to draw out here the change in approach to ethnicity that this work broached. Firstly, it is situated firmly within the 'Instrumentalist' camp, arguing that twentieth century ethnic identifications are not simply a reformulated continuation of pre-colonial identities. Vail posits the assumption, common to

---

119 N. Glazer and D. Moynihan, *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*, New York, 1975.
120 Ibid, p.p.11-14.
121 L. Vail (ed), T*he Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, 1989.
122 See for example, T. Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition Revisited', in *Inventions and boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism. Occasional Paper No 11*, Roskilde, Denmark. 1994.
123 See introduction to L. Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism.*
124 Ibid.

much marxian analysis, that the uneven introduction of a capitalist, colonial economy, and the social, economic and political upheavals that this entailed, provided the historical 'fault-line' from which politicised, contemporary ethnicities emerged. The discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, and the developing migrant labour system, are argued to be significant factors in the forming of these identities.[125] This is also argued to be the fundamental factor linking southern Africa as a region. Secondly, Vail argues that lower middle class, intellectual 'culture-brokers' were a fundamental driving force in constructing reformulated ethnic identities. This situated twentieth century ethnic movements in the area firmly within the political sphere, much as Glazer and Moynihan did but with the inclusion of class analysis. In fact Vail discerns three variables in the construction of ethnic identities after the penetration of colonial capitalism:

> *First...it was essential to have a group of intellectuals involved in formulating it...a group of culture brokers. Second, there was widespread use of African intermediaries to administer the subordinate peoples...this served to define the boundaries and texture of the new ideologies. Third, ordinary people had a real need for so-called 'traditional values' at a time of rapid social change, thus opening the way for the wide acceptance of new ideologies.*[126]

This theoretical model illustrates a third element of change in marxian historiographical accounts of ethnicity. For it takes into consideration the contribution of the mass of the southern African people in terms of ethnic construction. This allows it to avoid the pitfalls of approaches such as that of Mafeje, which tend to depict 'ordinary people as being credulous, blindly accepting the ethnic party line from their devious betters'.[127]

Vail's edited collection also illustrates the growing theoretical eclecticism which has also been demonstrated in other works regarding ethnicity in this period. There are probably a number of reasons for this. Firstly, the inability of earlier, less eclectic, approaches to construct an adequate explanatory paradigm vis-à-vis the continuing flourishing of ethnic movements (both in South Africa and in a more global context). As such, his introduction to this collection represents a continuation of the move towards theoretical eclecticism so apparent in the studies mentioned above. Secondly, there appeared during the 1980s a number of influential works - primarily concerned with nationalism - but which also had a profound impact on scholars' approaches to the study of ethnicity. Vail's own acceptance of the possibility that

---

[125] Ibid, p.p.7-10.
[126] Ibid, p.11.
[127] Ibid, p.5.

ordinary Africans could play a part in creating ethnic identities could well have been influenced by his reading of Horowitz and Giddens. In fact, Vail specifically acknowledges the influence of these two scholars on his theoretical approach.[128]

Both these authors arguably approached ethnicity from a somewhat 'primordialist' perspective during the 1980s, utilising psychological perspectives in their analyses.[129] Interestingly enough, Horowitz also displays similarities of approach to 'Pluralist' theory, including advocating a consociational solution to 'ethnic conflict' in South Africa.[130] The fact that a broadly Marxian work (although Vail himself is not a Marxist) can take on board some of the tenets of a 'Pluralist' approach suggests in itself the increased flexibility of radical scholarship. There are many problems with the approach of Horowitz which will be examined a little later. However, he does posit the assumption that ethnic mobilisation can emanate from 'below' as much as from 'above', thus implying that ordinary Africans are actively involved, and that intellectual 'culture-brokers' are not the only element participating in its construction. The difference between this conceptualisation, and that posited by Vail, is that, although Vail accepts active participation by ordinary Africans in the creation of ethnic identities (and it is probable that the theories of Horowitz influenced this assumption), he does not, as illustrated by his theoretical model quoted above, believe this is the primary factor. Instead, he places great emphasis on the importance of middle-class intellectual 'culture-brokers' in creating ethnic ideologies. This also contrasts with the earlier studies of Mayer, who placed far more emphasis on the active agency of 'ordinary' people in shaping their own consciousnesses and identities in the wake of colonial and capitalist penetration.

The stress placed by Marxist social historians in the late 1980s on the importance of this social and economic group has much to do with the specific nature of southern African ethnic identities, and their specific historical context. Works such as Hobsbawm and Ranger's 'Invention of Tradition'[131] stressed the recently 'invented' nature of supposedly ancient customs and traditions, and Ranger's chapter within this edited collection argued for the influence of colonial Europeans in 'inventing' customs within their African colonies in order to perpetuate their rule. Furthermore, African intellectual culture-brokers often upheld these 'inventions' in order to pursue their own private, self-interested agendas. The invention of 'tribes' was very much part of this contested ideological arena as far as Ranger was concerned. Ranger's contribution to the work also emphasised the politicisation of identities through the impact of colonialism. As he later remarks, the work posited the assumption that

---

[128] Ibid, p.18.

[129] D. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, Los Angeles, 1985; A. Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence*, Los Angeles, 1985.

[130] D. Horowitz, *A Democratic South Africa? Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society*, Berkeley, 1991.

[131] E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 1983.

African identities 'of 'tribe', gender and generation were all bounded by the rigidities of invented tradition'.[132] This codified ossification of identities, including invented 'tribal' ones, was especially relevant to South Africa, whose indigenous population not only had to face the imposition of colonial divide-and-rule policies, which involved the 'invention' of 'tribal' categories, but also the later 'Homelands' policy of the apartheid regime, which additionally attempted to impose invented 'ethnic' identities from 'above'. There can be little doubt that Ranger's study thus had a considerable influence on Vail.

The articles contained within Vail's edited collection also demonstrate a greater diversity of approach towards the study of ethnic identities than his introduction allows. Bekker criticises Vail for utilising the word 'Tribalism' in the title of the work in question, in spité of arguing within his introduction that ethnic identities should not be condemned wholesale as a reactionary, divisive force:[133]

> *That the term tribalism is pejorative in contemporary South African society is without doubt. By using it, these scholars signal moral judgement, perhaps even condemnation of these ethnic communities and their particularistic values. In choosing this title, Vail disregarded his own admonishment that condemn -ation would 'accomplish very little .*[134]

Bekker's term 'these scholars' refers to the studies of ethnic identities within South Africa carried out by Shula Marks, Hugh MacMillan and Jeff Peires, as well as Leroy Vail himself. Bekker continues to criticise them for their 'disparaging' accounts of the ethnic identities with which they are concerned, in contrast to what they perceive as a broader, more democratic and all-embracing South African nationalism.[135] There is some substance to this criticism. For these scholars do not deconstruct the democratic nationalist paradigm with which they counterpoise the ethnic identities that form the basis of their studies. They still seem to portray politicised ethnic identities primarily as obstacles to the progression of democratic nationalism. However, it is questionable that there is a monopoly on the interpretation of what constitutes democratic nationalism. This is a highly contentious field in South Africa, as any criticism of the ANC's democratic approach could be deemed to be an advocation of consociationalism. Indeed, Horowitz does support this viewpoint and for this should be criticised (see below).

---

[132] T. Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition Revisited', p.6.

[133] L. Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism*, p.2, p.17, p.18.

[134] S. Bekker, *Ethnicity in Focus*, p.88. This criticism seems partially unjustified. Vail was accepting the reality of politicised ethnicity, not attempting to avoid the issue. However it is interesting that the original version of the collection was entitled 'The Political Economy of Ethnicity'.

[135] Ibid, p.p.87-8.

Bekker also portrays implicit tendencies towards this approach in his critique of Marxian works on ethnicity. Nevertheless, it does seem valid to criticise these studies for portraying ethnicity in a somewhat one-dimensional sense. They constantly posit the assumption that ethnic mobilisation from colonialism onwards is in the final analysis a created, intellectual construct from 'above', which is adhered to by the mass of the people due to the traumas of colonialism, capitalist penetration, and the social, political, and economic upheavals that these entailed.

Vail himself can be criticised in another sense. His introduction gives the impression that the individual contributions within his edited collection represent similar points of view. This is especially the case with his contention that ethnic identities from the impact of colonialism onwards are political constructs from 'above', which are fundamentally divisive. However, there are marked variations of approach between these various works, and different emphases are placed on different aspects of ethnic identification by the various scholars concerned. Gendered aspects of ethnicity are one important example, and this will be discussed in the next section. Ranger's article on the creation of 'Manyika' ethnic identity also demonstrates that not all the scholars who contributed to the said volume viewed ethnic identities as solely an ideology constructed through political self-interest.[136] Ranger's piece owes an intellectual debt to Benedict Anderson. Anderson argues that the principal material precondition for nationalism is commercial printing on a widespread scale - 'print-capitalism'. This spreads the idea of the nation and the ideology of nationalism, through the standardisation of languages and the dissemination of nationalist ideology. In this way, nations could be 'imagined'. This influenced many scholars involved in the study of nationalism, and also penetrated many studies of ethnicity.[137] The stress placed by Ranger on missionary standardisation of language in his work clearly reflects the ideas of Anderson. Anderson had put ideology into the forefront of radical scholarship, moving away from a solely materialist-based analysis, and illustrating the importance of language codification in terms of establishing broader forms of 'imagined' identities.

Ranger also posits the argument that ethnic identities need not degenerate into politicised ideologies, but can represent constructive responses to socio-economic change.[138] He comments that ethnic identifications work at several levels, and that they can be reformulated from 'below' as well as from 'above'.[139] This is perhaps something which is not taken fully into account in Vail's introduction. Vail states the following with regard to the study of ethnicity:

---

136 T. Ranger, 'Missionaries, Migrants and the Manyika: The Invention of Ethnicity in Zimbabwe', in L. Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism*, p.p.118-151. Ranger's changing approaches to ethnic identities are explored in more detail in chapter 4.

137 For an example situated in the South African context see I. Hofmeyer, 'Building a Nation From Words: Afrikaans Language, Literature and Ethnic Identity, 1902-1924', in S. Marks and S.Trapido, *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism*

138 T. Ranger, 'Missionaries , Migrants and the Manyika', p.146.

139 See especially his comments on 'Manyika' migrant labourers, ibid, p.p.137-41.

> *It is thus only common sense to accept that no one explanation suffices to 'explain' it wholly and in every instance. But it is plainly inadequate merely to accept that all interpretations have some elements of truth within them and then try to cobble them together into an intellectual construct comprising elements of each.*[140]

One can't help thinking that, to a certain extent, Vail is guilty of the same process of 'cobbling together' of which he is so critical.

There were other new approaches to the study of ethnicity in southern Africa in the 1980s which partially deviated from the conceptual route mapped by Vail. Heribert Adam, a sociologist based in the United States, and Hermann Giliomee, a liberal Afrikaner historian, produced a comprehensive analysis of Afrikaner ethnicity in 1979.[141] Like Saul, this heralded a break from the then dominant materialist analyses of ethnicity, but this time from a sociologist working from a broadly Weberian perspective, and a liberal historian (who nevertheless, stressed the importance of class analysis). This particular study was one of the first to stress the importance of psychological factors with regard to Afrikaner ethnicity, set within a materialist perspective. Giliomee in fact later contributed a paper to Vail's collection.[142] The 1979 work represents a seminal break from the liberal mainstream with regard to the study South African ethnicity at the time. Another important set of studies, although not solely with regard to ethnicity, were those produced by the Comaroffs, especially in the 1980s.[143] The focus on consciousness in these analyses reinforces the concept of ethnicity consisting of a state of mind.[144]

2.4 Psychology, Anthropology, Gender and Ethnicity.

The insights of psychology attracted the attention of many scholars concerned with the study of ethnicity in this period. Horowitz's use of psychology has already been referred to briefly. There is much similarity in some of Horowitz's insights to those made by Gulliver in the 1960s.[145] However, Horowitz takes Gulliver's recognition of the importance of symbolism further, in the context of criticising solely materialist analyses of ethnic identities. He argues

---

[140] L. Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism*, p.7.

[141] H. Adam and H. Giliomee, *Ethnic Power Mobilised: Can South Africa Change?* New Haven, 1979.

[142] H. Giliomee, 'The Beginnings of Afrikaner Ethnic Consciousness, 1850-1915'in L. Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism*, p.p.21-55.

[143] See especially the following: J. Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance: The Culture and History of a South African People.* Chicago, 1985; J. Comaroff and J. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa.* Chicago, 1991.

[144] Aspects of some of these studies will be explored in later chapters, especially in the context of the importance of subjective consciousness in the formation of ethnic identity.

[145] See chapter 1.

that just because educated elites make use of ethnic antipathy for their own economic purposes 'does not mean that ethnic conflict is primarily about jobs and requisites. The elites could not use the antipathy for their own ends unless ethnic feeling were already strong'.[146]

If Horowitz is right, this suggests that ethnic mobilisation is controlled as much from 'below' as it is from 'above'. It also suggests that there is more than one level of ethnic identification, with symbolism providing an equal motivating force to that of materialism. This contrasts with the work of Abner Cohen who recognised the importance of symbolic factors, but argued that they were contingent on materialist ones.[147] It also suggests that elite manipulation of ethnic identities can only gain mass support when their materialist aims articulate with the symbolic aims of the mass of the people.

The psychology of symbolism influenced several anthropological works in the 1970s, thus presaging that of Horowitz. Epstein's 1978 study provides a particularly interesting example.[148] He criticises both earlier anthropological works for overemphasising perceived 'cultural' aspects of ethnicity, and later social scientific approaches (such as that of Glazer and Moynihan) who he argues place too much stress on the political dimension.[149] He states that it is necessary to take into account what he terms the cognitive and affective dimensions of ethnic identification, arguing that ethnic affiliations are not based solely in rationality.[150] This is in stark contrast to the studies contained in Vail's collected edition, and especially Vail's own introduction which views ethnic mobilisation as rooted virtually entirely in rational objectives. Epstein comments that ethnic affiliations need to be understood in both their individual and communal manifestations.[151] Other established anthropologists also turned to the insights offered by psychology in the 1970s, including Phillip Mayer.[152] The importance of symbolism in ethnic mobilisation is also a central tenet of the work of Anthony Smith. Smith provides just one example of the rash of scholars involved with the study of nationalism who also influenced works concerned with that of ethnicity in the 1980s/early 1990s.[153] Smith takes a markedly different approach to such as Anderson with regard to the origins of nationalism. He argues

---

[146] D. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, California, 1985, p.225.

[147] See chapter 1.

[148] A. Epstein, *Ethos and Identity: Three Studies in Ethnicity*, London, 1978.

[149] Ibid, p.p.3-5 and p.p.93-4 respectively.

[150] Ibid, p.94. For a more recent approach to ethnicity which argues for the importance of affective emotional elements in ethnic identities see W. Conner, 'Beyond Reason: The Nature of the Ethnonational Bond', in W. Conner (ed), *Ethno-Nationalism: The Quest for Understanding*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994.

[151] A. Epstein, *Ethos and Identity*, p.p.101-103.

[152] P. Mayer, *Socialization: The Approach From Social Anthropology*, London, 1972.

[153] See especially the following: A. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, *1986*, and *National Identity*, London, 1991; E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, 1983; E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*, Cambridge, 1990; B. Davidson, *The Black Man's Burden: Afrca and the Curse of the Nation-State*, London, 1992. L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, London, 1992 also offers some interesting insights. B. Anderson's seminal work has already been mentioned.

that nations are not modern phenomena, but have their roots in earlier ethnic origins.[154] Furthermore, symbolism is integral to their survival.

There is more than a hint of primordialism in Smith's approach, and psychological approaches in general could arguably be said to reinforce apartheid ideology in the context of South Africa. The problem with a psychological approach is that it could suggest that ethnic groups differ fundamentally between themselves somehow, and that a pluralist, consociational society is the only way that they will live together without conflict. Horowitz takes this angle.[155] This begs the question, however, of exactly whose interests are being represented by politicised 'ethnic' movements. For example, it is questionable that *Inkatha* and Mangosuthu Buthelezi represent the interests of many Zulus.[156] Horowitz fails to distinguish fully the various levels of ethnic identification in his consociational model, merely stressing the ossified, ideological level. Ranger, in contrast, does see positive aspects to ethnic mobilisation (as illustrated above). The problem with his approach, like that of Saul earlier, is that it tends to stress a 'modernisation' model of sorts:

> *Manyika identity arose...not...as the fruit of megalomaniac tribalism but as a very human and often constructive response to socio-economic change, a response however that now needs to be replaced by the development of other kinds of consciousness.*[157]

Fields, in a different context, has argued for a more relativist approach to African consciousness. She states that historical researchers 'must reconstruct the horizon within which historical subjects thought and acted.'[158] The attempt to recognise ethnic consciousness within its own specific context, and to perceive it as a state of mind, would perhaps avoid 'modernisation' approaches which dismiss ethnic identities as atavistic to various degrees or, worse, consociational models which advocate apartheid by the back-door in some respects.

Another issue which began to emerge in the late 1980s was the gendered nature of ethnic identities. As mentioned earlier, anthropological approaches in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s had already implicitly demonstrated this. However radical historians, due to the political controversies surrounding ethnicity, had not developed these insights.[159] Marks, Butler and

---

154 A. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations.*
155 D. Horowitz, *A Democratic South Africa?*
156 See chapter 5.
157 T. Ranger, 'Missionaries, Migrants and the Manyika', in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, p.146.
158 K. Fields, *Revival and Rebellion in Colonial Central Africa*, Princeton, 1985. p.20-21.
159 Although Ranger does approach the subject in *The Invention of Tradition.*

Harries - in their respective contributions to Vail's work - begin to address this aspect of ethnicity, again demonstrating the differing approaches amongst the various contributions to this work, which Vail failed to recognise. There are also important differences between these approaches to gender. Marks demonstrates how women are discriminated against in her historical analysis of Zulu ethnicity.[160] However, by focusing solely on the politicised aspects of ethnic identification, she portrays women as reactive rather than proactive agents in the construction of ethnic ideologies. In contrast Butler, in his analysis of Afrikaner ethnicity in the first half of the twentieth century, demonstrates how Afrikaner women could carve out a circumscribed, positive identity for themselves, which straddled both the cultural sphere to which women were relegated, and the political sphere, which remained the domain of men.[161] The work of Anthias and Yuval-Davis considerably developed concepts of womens' roles in ethnic movements, constructing a theoretical framework with which to analyse gendered aspects of its nature.[162] They implicitly develop Butler's line of analysis, demonstrating that women were often involved in the contested construction of ethnic identity formation. However, the gendered nature of ethnicity was only beginning to receive serious attention by the late 1980s, especially in South Africa.[163] It seems reasonable to state that a return to the insights offered by earlier anthropological works would further the analysis of this aspect of ethnicity.

---

[160] S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness', p.p.215-41, in L. Vail, *The Creation of* Tribalism, p.p.215-241.

[161] J. Butler, 'Afrikaner Women and the Creation of Ethnicity in a Small South African Town, 1902-1950', p.p.55-82, in L. Vail, The *Creation of Tribalism*, p.p.55-82.

[162] F. Anthias and N. Yuval-Davis, *Women-Nation-State*, London, 1989.

[163] See also chapters 7 and 8.

3. FROM MORAL ETHNICITY TO POLITICAL TRIBALISM:[1] PERIODISING TWENTIETH CENTURY SOUTH AFRICAN ETHNICITY, WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE EASTERN CAPE.

As the title suggests, this chapter periodises twentieth century South African ethnic identities utilising the Eastern Cape as a primary example. It attempts to provide a theoretical paradigm with which to analyse the development of South African ethnicity, and to periodise these identities within the structure of this framework. There is an element of artificiality about the periodisation, as the ethnic constructions mentioned could - and did - overlap. However, there seems to be a broad pattern of development which this form of periodisation captures. Emphasis is deliberately placed on the Eastern Cape for two reasons. Firstly it allows a further examination of the work of Iona and Phillip Mayer who lived and worked in the region for a number of years.[2] Although not primarily concerned with studying ethnicity, they were very much involved in analysing aspects of the day to day consciousness of the eastern Cape population, especially in terms of gender, generational differences and identities forged through the process of migrant labour. As different forms of identity are inextricably intertwined with the formation of ethnic consciousness their work is particularly useful, especially as the Mayers allow Africans 'to speak for themselves', thus avoiding schematic, structural analyses. Secondly the 'Red'/'School' divide amongst the Xhosa-speaking population, with which much of the Mayers' work is concerned, provides particular insights into the nature of moral ethnicity. The chapter seeks to outline a theoretical model rather than analysing changing identities in detail. Specific aspects of each period will be analysed in greater depth in the following chapters.

By drawing primarily upon the Eastern Cape material, but with reference to other areas in South Africa, it is argued that three main periods of ethnic identity mobilisation can be discerned through the twentieth century: late nineteenth and early twentieth century ethnic mobilisation over land and rural resources; ethnicised identities formed in the context of the mid-twentieth century mining industry; the manipulation of ethnicity by the apartheid state through its policy of 'separate development', especially from 1960 onwards. A fourth period, involving the intertwining of shack city and hostel worker militarisation and ethnic identities in the 1980s/early 1990s, is discussed in later chapters. Migrant labour and apartheid social engineering are shown to be central factors in the changing nature of these ethnicised

---

[1] The terms 'moral ethnicity' and 'political tribalism' have been taken from J. Lonsdale's and B. Berman's book *Unhappy Valley; Conflict in Kenya and Africa. Book 2, Violence and Ethnicity.* London, 1992. Also see J. Lonsdale, 'Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism', in P. Kaarsholm and J. Hultin (eds) *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism.* International Development Studies Occasional Paper No 11, Roskilde University, Denmark, 1994.

[2] See chapters 1and 2.

identities. Pre-colonial identity formation is also argued to have affected the particular ways that twentieth century ethnic identities have been constructed, providing the cultural building blocks upon whcih these later identities were founded. Of fundamental importance is an attempt to illustrate the shift from fluid, 'popular-democratic' identities, mobilised around moral ethnicity, to the ossified, elite political tribalism which emerged from the discourses inherent in moral ethnicity. The moral ethnicity-political tribalism paradigm is thus outlined in the initial section.[3]

3.1 Claiming Back the Land: The Ethnic Component of Rural Mobilisation in Early Twentieth Century South Africa.

In his analysis of Kikuyu identity during the Mau Mau rebellion in 1950s colonial Kenya, Lonsdale argues that ethnic identity was the reverse of what it is often said to be-unthinking conformity. Rather, 'common ethnicity was the arena for the sharpest social and political division'.[4] Lonsdale perceives this form of moral ethnic debate as originating from the penetration of colonial capitalism. He argues that pre-colonial African society was bonded together in a type of 'moral economy', which ensured that any individual accumulation of wealth simultaneously incurred social obligations: 'rich and poor had duties to each other; patronage had to earn its service'.[5] However with the impact of colonialism and capitalism, this form of social cohesion became subverted or distorted, causing people to question its validity.

> *Big men might become official chiefs and thus careless of their clients; but weaker members of society, poor men and women generally, might also aquire unprecedented bargaining power by engaging in wage-work elsewhere or by going to school. These new social competitions fostered new arguments about what forms of achievement made one a good member of the local community. Competition in community service harked back to the social morality of an imaginatively more virtuous, and thus communalistic, past.*[6]

The divisions and cleavages wrought by colonialism and capitalism were thus inter-and intra-ethnic in nature.

---

[3] Lonsdale's theoretical paradigm does in fact allow for a theoretical periodisation of ethnic identities. There are problems with their analysis, but their framework does provide a basis for the theoretical approach developed in this chapter and throughout the rest of the thesis.

[4] J. Lonsdale, 'Moral Ethnicity', p.p.138-139.

[5] Ibid, p.139.

[6] Ibid.

> *Just as moral ethnicity was socially constructed in debate about honour - between, say, unlettered polygynous elders in round huts and monogamous teachers in square houses, between 'red' and 'school' people as they say in South Africa - so, too, there has been dispute as to who can best 'speak for the tribe' in the political arena where large constituencies count.*[7]

Lonsdale refers to this latter manifestation of ethnic identity as political tribalism, and argues that it is this form of ethnic consciousness, emanating from the colonial invention of 'tribes', that translated the principled political argument of moral ethnicity 'into unprincipled faction'.[8] Despite some short-comings, Lonsdale's theoretical paradigm reinforces the periodisation of ethnic identities below and integrates with much of the anthropological work of the Mayers in the eastern Cape context.

The divisions which arose between Mfengu and Xhosa peoples from the late nineteenth century onwards can be viewed through the prism of the moral ethnicity/political tribalism model, when suitably adjusted to take account of local conditions and events. Until comparatively recently the historiography concerned with nineteenth and early twentieth century Mfengu and Xhosa identities, and nineteenth century Eastern Cape history in general, has been based on the assumption that the Mfengu were originally several distinct clans who fled Zululand at the time of the *Mfecane* and settled in the Eastern Cape under Xhosa patronage. The Xhosa peoples, who themselves consisted of several distinct chieftaincies, had lived in the area for much longer, being descended from the first Bantu-speaking people who inhabited the area.[9] According to these versions of Eastern Cape history, the Mfengu deserted their Xhosa patrons and sought colonial protection in 1835, during one of several wars between the British colonial power and Xhosa peoples. This led to the preferential treatment of the Mfengu by the colonial administration in terms of land allocation and access to education.[10] The Mfengu also tended to accept Christian doctrine to a far greater extent than Xhosa peoples at this time, thus endearing them further in the eyes of the colonial power, who viewed them as erstwhile allies against the Xhosa.

---

[7] Ibid, p.140.

[8] Ibid, p.p.140-141.

[9] See for example the following: L. Switzer, *Power and Resistance in an African Society: The Ciskei Xhosa and the Making of South Africa*, London, 1993; P. Mayer, ''The Origin and Decline of Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', in P. Mayer (ed), *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society: Anthropological Perspectives on Labour Migration in South Africa*, Cape Town, 1980; C. Manona, 'Ethnic Relations in the Ciskei', in N. Charton (ed), *Ciskei: A South African Homeland*, London, 1980; R. Moyer, 'Some Current Manifestations of Early Mfengu History', *Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Collected Seminar Papers*, Vol 3, 1971; J. Peires, 'Ethnicity and Pseudo-Ethnicity in the Ciskei', in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, 1989.

[10] But see J. Thompson, 'Mission among the Kaffirs and Fingoes of Southern Africa', PR 1615, 1854, Rhodes University, South Africa. This pamphlet contains a letter from a Reverend James Laing, dated 8th December 1853, which suggests, in the area around Lovedale at least, Xhosa peoples sometimes upheld the value of mission education more than Mfengu.

This version of Mfengu/Xhosa history has recently been vehemently attacked by historians influenced by the work of Julian Cobbing.[11] In short, they have argued that the supposed Natal origins of the Mfengu is a myth. In reality the Mfengu were mostly opportunistic Xhosa military collaborators, and the colonial power perpetuated the myth of freeing Mfengu from Xhosa 'bondage' in order to complete their subjugation of Xhosa peoples and to disguise their aggression as philanthropy.[12] It is important to take account of both these versions of Eastern Cape history as, if the latter interpretation is accepted, ethnic identities are virtually solely the preserve of twentieth century ethnic culture brokers, allowing little in terms of moral ethnic debate emanating from 'below'.

Nevertheless whichever version is accepted, there is little doubt that Xhosa and Mfengu identities were mobilised in terms of access to land and rural resources from the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. For rural communities throughout the Eastern Cape region, ethnic identification 'could be an integral part of the way in which they defined themselves both from each other and from the pressures imposed in colonisation'.[13] Additionally these identities waxed and waned in tandem with changing political, social and economic circumstances over time. The expropriation of land by the British colonial power led to a divide amongst many African peoples which can roughly be perceived in terms of 'modernisers' and 'traditionalists', and which often translated itself in an ethnicised manner. If conventional historiography is accepted, the second wave of immigrants into the Cape, including the Mfengu, could gain from allying themselves with the British. The Mfengu had attached themselves to more wealthy Xhosa men as clients soon after their arrival, which eventually might have led to assimilation into the host group. However, in 'the short time between the Mfengus' arrival and their British-sponsored exodus to the Ciskei, they could not have achieved a position which they felt deeply committed to defend; they were ready to listen to British overtures promising them land of their own and to missionaries offering them help'.[14] Nevertheless, significant inter-marriage did occur between Mfengu and Xhosa peoples, if evidence from British settlers and colonial administrators is accepted. For example Colonel

---

[11] Cobbing has argued that African migration and state formation in the 1810s and 1820s was caused by the illegal activities of colonial slave raiders who covered up their operations by claiming that the Zulu kingdom under Shaka had caused these disruptions. He thus claims that the *Mfecane* was a myth perpetuated to justify white supremacy by portraying blacks as inherently violent. See J. Cobbing, 'The Mfecane as Alibi: Thoughts on the Battles of Dithakong and Mbolompo', *JAH*, Vol 29, 1988, and 'A Tainted Well: The Objectives, Historical Fantasies and Working Methods of James Stuart, wth Counter-Argument, *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, Vol 11, 1988.

[12] See for example, A. Webster, 'Land Expropriation and Labour Extraction Under Cape Colonial Rule: The War of 1835 and the 'Emancipation' of the Fingo', MA Thesis, Rhodes University, South Africa, 1991; T. Stapleton, 'Oral Evidence in a Pseudo-Ethnicity: the Fingo Debate', unpublished personal copy; T. Stapleton, 'Gathering Under the Milkwood Tree: The Development of Mfengu Tribalism in the Eastern Cape (1878-1978), unpublished personal copy. Stapleton's articles are due to be published at the time of writing.

[13] W. Beinart, 'Conflict in Qumbu: Rural Consciousness, Ethnicity and Violence in the Colonial Transkei', in W. Beinart and C. Bundy, *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa*, London, 1987, p.108.

[14] P. Mayer, 'The Origin and Decline of Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', p.p.9-10. This interpretation broadly corresponds with the interpretations of the historians mentioned in footnote 9.

Bisset, who had served as a quarter-master general for many years in the Eastern Cape region, argued during a Select Committee enquiry into cattle thefts in 1863 that it was virtually impossible to distinquish culturally between Mfengu and Xhosa peoples:

> *(T)here used to be a slight difference. You could tell a Fingo formerly by a large hole in his ear...(B)ut...(t)he great distinction there used to be has worn out...They are perfectly one nation. Their language is the same, with but a few expressions differing.*[15]

Other informants to this committee commented in a similar fashion, suggesting that Mfengu and Xhosa identities were at the time fluid and processual.[16]

It could be argued that this reinforces recent revisions of nineteenth century Eastern Cape history, in that this evidence suggests Xhosa and Mfengu identities could be 'situationally selected'[17] at times when it was socially, economically and politically advantageous to do so. However, the considerable confusion of the informants to this Select Committee suggests otherwise. The Committee concerned directed much of its attention to the perceived 'threat' from Africans both in terms of cattle theft and possible military resistance. Therefore some of the recorded evidence centred implicitly and explicitly around whether it was appropriate to promote 'tribal' identities or encourage 'detribalisation'. Bisset implicitly took the view that detribalisation should be promoted. When asked whether he considered colonial land expropriation could be a major factor in inciting further military conflicts with African peoples in the area, He replied firmly in the negative, placing far more emphasis on African socialisation processes and concepts of manhood:

> *(I)t would arise more from that feeling of restlessness a Kafir always has; and, besides, without a war no young man can become an 'amadoda' - that is, a warrior. He must distinguish himself in war, otherwise he is only a boy ('quanqua') till he has had a fight.*[18]

He further argues that Mfengu peoples had similar 'war-like compulsions'.[19] He concludes by arguing vehemently for the complete destruction of African customs, or removal of the African

---

[15] Evidence of Colonel Bisset to the Select Committee on Cattle Thefts, July 1863, 'Cape of Good Hope. The Report and Proceedings of the Committee of the Legislative Council on Cattle Thefts'. Cape Parliamentary Papers, C4, 1863.
[16] Ibid. Evidence of W. Stanton, Military Contract Supplier, p.38, p.40-41, p.49; G. Wood, Colonial Administrator and Farmer, p.61-62, p.63; S. Cawood, Military Contract Supplier and Farmer, p.53, p.59.
[17] This phrase is borrowed from A.P. Epstein, *Politics in an Urban African Community*, Manchester, 1958. See chapter 1 for an outline of this concept.
[18] Evidence of Colonel Bisset, Select Committee on Cattle-Thefts, p.16.
[19] Ibid.

population beyond the border of the colony.[20] Other respondents took the view that 'tribal' identities should be promoted.[21]

The confusion and lack of clarity and consensus amongst the respondents, all of whom had lived for a considerable time in the colony, does not suggest some grand colonial conspiracy to artificially create a Mfengu identity in order to perpetuate colonial rule and expropriate African communal land. The fact that all the respondents refer constantly to the categories 'Fingo' and 'Kafir',[22] whilst additionally mentioning that it was difficult to distinguish between the two, also contradicts this recent historical revisionism. This is not to suggest that the colonial power really did facilitate the release of Mfengu peoples from Xhosa servitude. This colonial and missionary based propaganda has for a long time been dismissed by historians.[23] There was also rivalry between the two peoples due to Mfengu cooperation with the colonial forces, as is evidenced below. However, as Switzer argues, it is difficult to believe that thousands of Xhosa, however desparate, would have converted to a new Mfengu identity virtually overnight in 1835, and the amount of African oral evidence for the existence of a Mfengu identity also suggests that it could not just be a figment of the colonial imagination.[24]

Nevertheless the fact that there was inter-mingling of the two peoples does imply that a reformulation of identities was occuring. Intra-ethnic, as well as inter-ethnic, debates had been initiated in terms of what values best represented 'Xhosa-ness' or 'Mfengu-ness', the essence of moral ethnicity. Uneven colonial and capitalist penetration, and subsequent land expropriation had led to people mobilising around particularist rural, ethnicised identities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As such, these identities were often centred around the institution of the chieftaincy. Furthermore by the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, the advantages gained by communities such as the Mfengu through allying with the colonial power had begun to dissipate, as most African resistance had been effectively crushed, and therefore there was less need for these alliances. This led to a certain demoralisation amongst these latter communities at the same time as a renaissance of identity, often centred around the institution of the chieftaincy, occured amongst communities who had inhabited areas of the Eastern Cape before the upheavals of the *Mfecane*.[25]

---

[20] Ibid, p.19.

[21] One respondent argued for the deliberate promotion of 'tribal' rivalries in order to subvert the perceived threat of combined Mfengu/Xhosa military resistance to the colonial power.: Evidence of W. Stanton, p.49, ibid. For further implied suggestions that encouraging 'tribalism' would be an advantageous move for the colony see p.40, p.53, p.59.

[22] These were the colonial terms for Mfengu and Xhosa respectively.

[23] All the historians mentioned in footnotes 9, 11 and 12 dismiss this form of colonial historical misrepresentation and provide comprehensive empirical evidence to justify this, by now, moribund debate.

[24] L. Switzer, *Power and Resistance*, p.60.

[25] For examples in early twentieth century Transkei and surrounding areas see W. Beinart 'Conflict in Qumbu' and 'Amafelandawonye (The Diehards): Popular Protest and Women's Movements in Herschel District in the 1920s', in *Hidden Struggles*. For examples in Natal see S. Marks, 'Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation', *JSAS*, Vol 4, No1, 1977, and S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism, and the State in Twentieth*

This can be related to the moral ethnicity/political tribalism model. In the context of the Eastern Cape it is useful to return to the historiographical debate above regarding Mfengu origins. The proponents of the revisionist view, due to the fact that they perceive the Mfengu to be virtually the sole creation of the British colonial power and Xhosa opportunists, portray early twentieth century Mfengu ethnicity very much in the politically tribalist mode. Arguments for a synthesis between cultural categories and ethnicised identities, emanating from the people themselves, have little room in their analysis. Stapleton's work is a case in point. He has recently examined the development of Mfengu identity between the years 1878 and 1978.[26] His periodisation of Mfengu ethnic identity development mirrors that outlined above. He refers to the mineral discoveries and rapid conquest of all the remaining independent African states in the late nineteenth century as a significant moment in Mfengu identity, with African allies now an obsolete item in the colonial agenda. Following in the footsteps of Vail, to whom he specifically refers, Stapleton argues that Mfengu ethnic culture brokers 'responded to this fall from grace by reinventing and reinforcing the Mfengu identity from within the community itself'.[27] Emphasis is placed upon the role of early African Nationalists such as J.T. Jabavu and D.D.T. Jabavu in fostering Mfengu 'tribalism'.

D.D.T. Jabavu's contributions to Mfengu identity are examined in more detail in chapter nine, where I take issue with Stapleton's caricature of him. Far from being an ardent proponent of Mfengu political tribalism, D.D.T. Jabavu seems to promote a particular version of early African nationalism, rooted in selective African traditionalism. This did not mean that he in any way promoted tribalist tendencies-for political self-interest or otherwise. However, his particular version of African nationalism, rooted as it was in the Christian doctrine to which many Mfengu adhered, could be misunderstood to represent Mfengu 'tribalist' tendencies. In this contest, as chapter nine illustrates, Jabavu was a man of his time. In the first decades of the twentieth century there was not such a big difference between elite African nationalists and ordinary Africans. Value systems and identities were far more blurred and ambiguous than is often portrayed by some historians.

Stapleton's study is centred very much around the activities of elite culture brokers of the time, and their political machinations. He focuses on several issues such as the creation of 'Fingo Emancipation Day' in 1907, the re-writing of Mfengu history by ethnic culture brokers in order to promote Mfengu identity and supposedly emphasise Mfengu superiority over Xhosa peoples, and the artificial construction of Mfengu chieftaincies in order to retain access to land

---

Century Natal, London, 1986. Also see D. James, 'A Question of Ethnicity: Ndzundza Ndebele in a Lebowa Village', *JSAS*, Vol 16, No 1, 1990.

[26] T. Stapleton, 'Gathering Under the Milkwood Tree', *passim.*

[27] Ibid, p.5. The reference to Vail is on p.3. See chapter 2 for a critique of Vail's assumptions, which can also be applied to Stapleton in some respects, although Stapleton pursues a much more fundamentalist African nationalist line.

and a relatively privileged position vis-a-vis Xhosa peoples.[28] Whilst there is an element of truth in his argument, Stapleton places far too much emphasis on elite political machinations. Ethnicity is viewed solely as a constructed ideology, with little reference to the meaning of 'Mfengu' and 'Xhosa' to the bulk of the people concerned at the subjective, emotional level. Social and economic changes were significant factors in reformulating Xhosa and Mfengu identities in this period, but these changes were often translated by the bulk of the people concerned in cultural terms. Qumbu District in the Transkei provides a lucid example.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, Qumbu district experienced divisions which partially mirrored those experienced earlier in the Eastern Cape. Rivalry between immigrant Mfengu and Hlubi communities on the one hand, and Mpondomise groups on the other centred very much around the question of access to land, and this rivalry often translated itself in ethnicised conflict. Land had been taken from the Mpondomise in the late nineteenth century and given to the Mfengu and Hlubi. This was due to the fact that Mhlonhlo, chief of the Mpondomise, had rebelled against colonial authority in 1880, whilst the immigrants had remained loyal to the government.[29] The nineteenth century 'frontier' wars in the Eastern Cape also centred around concepts of resistance to, and cooperation with, the colonial authorities. As in Qumbu, the Mfengu communities cooperated with the colonialists in quelling Xhosa resistance, despite considerable inter-marriage between Xhosa and Mfengu peoples, and land was redistributed in favour of the Mfengu for their cooperation. Similar divides occured in late nineteenth century Natal, and elsewhere.[30] However, as with the Mfengu in the Eastern Cape, the old alliance between Mfengu 'collaborators' and the colonial power became increasingly superfluous as the need for African military alliances receded with the entrenchment of colonial rule.

'Progressive' Mfengu communities also suffered economically, as the British colonial administration began to increase pressure on Africans to provide cheap migrant labour. Rinderpest and East Coast fever also decimated livestock in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, at a time when access to markets was becoming increasingly restricted for Africans. Four social categories seem to have emerged in the Transkei during this period. These included an educated elite, who remained largely within leading positions in the mission schools, minor government posts and to some extent in commerce, therefore maintaining their economic position throughout the economic uncertainties of those years; the old loyal communities, such as the Mfengu, who were increasingly marginalised economically and politically in rural areas without possessing the education to gain salaried jobs in urban areas,

---

[28] T. Stapleton, 'Gathering Under the Milkwood Tree', p.p. 8-20. Stapleton's arguments will be re-examined in more detail a little later.
[29] W. Beinart and C. Bundy, 'Introduction', *Hidden Struggles*, p.15.
[30] See Footnote 25.

apart from unskilled migrant work - this group 'sought to bridge the gap with traditionalists through populist politics and the use of a common language of protest';[31] the traditionalist leaders, such as hereditary chiefs and headmen, who were increasingly merging with the new elite themselves through such experiences as mission education, and who sought to augment their own power and position, and also to represent their 'traditionalist' followers; and finally the 'traditionalist' mass of the people themselves, who were difficult to mobilise except on a local basis. The shift from a mid-Victorian policy of 'civilisation' and 'assimilation', towards a policy of 'cultural relativism' and segregation contributed considerably towards this reformulation of social groupings and identities. Colonial fears centred around black urbanisation and proletarianisation, with the possibility of an organised working class opposing colonial dominance, as well as the need for a cheap labour workforce, contributed towards this fundamental shift in policy.[32] This eventually facilitated the buttressing of the institution of the chieftaincy, with chiefs and headmen brought under the auspices of the colonial administration so that segregated reserves could be run through indirect rule. However, the institution of the chieftaincy would always remain ambiguous in this respect, for it remained the major focus of allegiance for many 'traditionalist' people. It also provided the leadership for them to resist colonial land expropriation through redefining their ethnic identity and uniting behind the chieftainship if a particular chief opposed colonial policy.[33] It is at this juncture that anthropological works such as those of the Mayers can provide further insights into the changing nature of African identities, including ethnicised ones, and also illustrate how these identities articulate with the moral ethnicity/political tribalism model.[34]

In many ways analyses such as that of Stapleton ignore these cultural factors in the construction of identities which embrace ethnicity. Even when he does analyse cultural divisions, at least in the twentieth century context, Stapleton tends to misinterpret them as examples of state induced politically tribalist tendencies facilitated by educated elite culture brokers and traditional authorities brought under the influence of the state. He also ignores the fact that elite politicians such as the Jabavus were in fact not so divorced from the mass of ordinary Africans as is sometimes portrayed.[35]

---

[31] This categorisation draws directly from W. Beinart and C. Bundy, 'Introduction', *Hidden Struggles*, p.p.11-12. In reality these categories often overlapped, and their boundaries were blurred.

[32] See S. Dubow, 'The Elaboration of Segregationist Ideology', in *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa, c. 1919-1936*, London, 1989.

[33] This is very much the thrust of Beinart and Bundy's argument in *Hidden Struggles*. Mhlonhlo was just one example in their work of a chief who became the focus of, in this case Mpondomise, redefined rural ethnic identity in defense of land and rural resources. Further examples of this form of ethnic mobilisation will receive analysis throughout the rest of the thesis. See chapter 5 for a detailed examination of similar occurences in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Natal. In this chapter the emphasis will remain on the Eastern Cape.

[34] The relationship between the 'Red'/'School' divide and Mfengu/Xhosa ethnicised conflict has been examined thoroughly in chapters 1and 2, and therefore will not be reiterated here.

[35] These issues are explored in some detail in chapter 9 in the wider context of South Africa in general.

Moral ethnicity did seem to emanate from the symbolic meanings inherent in institutions such as the chieftaincy in the early decades of the twentieth century. In this context, it seems to have represented a transitional shape, where multiple, processual, contested identities were interpreted by rural people in terms of the cultural values of the past, and the 'modernising' narratives of the present (for example, missionary influence and migrant labour). People could do this as their moral values were not tied to a systematic form of knowledge and moral outlook, allowing a certain flexibility in terms of consciousness and identity. Furthermore, people did not feel the need to attach themselves to culturally brokered state versions of ethnic or nationalist identities, as these made little symbolic sense in the moral universe which they inhabited. Radical and nationalist organisations, such as the ANC and the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union only made headway in this period when they consciously merged their wider versions of working class or nationalist identities with the needs and value systems of rural Africans.[36] Small-scale communities did not need consciously brokered forms of social coherence. Therefore state-sponsored politically tribalist versions of identity, or versions of African nationalism as promoted by the ANC, which might make sense to a small professional African elite, were not considered necessary in the moral universes that the mass of rural Africans inhabited. The contested moral ethnic identities of this period were very much a phenomenon of the time. Ethnicised identities were often formed within a contested moral ethnic arena, where - as Lonsdale argues - people debated what values best represented a 'good' member of the community. These might have indirectly lead to the buttressing of politically tribalist versions of ethnicised identities[37], but this was not necessarily how people in rural areas percieved them. However, ethnic mobilisation over rural resources and land were not the only constructed versions of ethnic identification in the first half of the twentieth century. Very work specific forms were also developing in the gold and diamond mines which had initiated South Africa's mineral and industrial revolutions.

3.2 Migrancy, Mining and Moral Ethnicity: The Reformulation of Ethnic Identities Through the Process of Migrant Labour

There is a substantial overlap between rural ethnic mobilisation over land and the beginning of the migrant labour system. Migrant labour became increasingly widespread after the discovery of diamonds and gold in the late nineteenth century, but it existed before the mineral revolution. For example, southern Mozambican migrant workers were employed on the Natal sugar plantations from the mid-nineteenth century.[38] It is also important to recognise that mass migrancy originated as much in the dynamics of African societies as in the demands of the mining industry. Migrant labourers remained very much part of the rural economy, which

---

[36] See chapters 5 and 9.

[37] A good example of this occured in Natal in the first few decades of the twentieth century. See chapter 5.

[38] See P. Harries, *Work, Culture and Identity*, London, 1994, chapter 2.

suited the cheap labour requirements of the plantations, and later the mining compounds, as well as the patriarchal structure of rural African communities.[39] However, ethnic identity reformulation in the mining compounds was particularly apparent in the mid-twentieth century, and therefore marks a new period in ethnic identity construction.

Harries distinguishes compound ethnic identification from earlier rural forms of identity in terms of a shift from the chieftaincy to culture as a focus of loyalty:

> *(I)n the cosmopolitan society of the diamond fields...the fictive element in kinship was extended to include a wider community in which the chief was replaced by culture as the focus of loyalty. At the same time, a society which accepted fictive kinship could easily extend this belief into a putative ethnicity built on the use of familial terms...Ethnicity, like kinship, was based on myths of origin, ascriptive and putative belonging, as well as relations of reciprocity.*[40]

The ideology of kinship has also been argued to have been an important homogenising force within pre-colonial societies - the basis of moral economies.[41] Harries also comments on the difference between ethnic categorisation from external sources, and ethnic self-ascription.[42]

The shift from chief to culture as the focus of loyalty perhaps represents one of the most important reformulations of ethnic identities in the context of the shift from rural to compound life.[43] Rural ethnic mobilisation often centred around chiefs in the early twentieth century. These rural identities themselves probably originated from earlier clan identities, and it is even possible that some of the peoples classified as Mfengu in Qumbu district were originally part of the Mpondomise chiefdoms prior to the *Mfecane.*[44] Therefore this section of the Mfengu could represent a people who originally were part of the kinship system of the Mpondomise, and subsequently acquired a separate ethnic identity, due to their particular response to colonial capitalist penetration. It is also possible that some Xhosa peoples attempted to assume a 'Mfengu' identity during the protracted wars waged against British colonial forces in

---

[39] The patriarchal nature of rural African communities were a fundamental influence in ethnic mobilisation, especially in the first half of the twentieth century. This receives greater analysis in chapter 7.

[40] P. Harries, *Work, Culture and Identity*, p.64.

[41] Ibid, p.p.63-66. Also see C. Hamilton and J. Wright, 'The Making of the 'Amalala': Ethnicity, Ideology and Relations of Subordintion in a Precolonial Context', *SAHJ*, Vol 22, 1990.

[42] Ibid, p.p.63-66. Wright and Hamilton comment in a similar fashion.

[43] This is not to suggest an inevitable erosion of the influence of chiefs. As will become apparent in the following chapters, the changing institution of the chieftaincy remained a potent factor in the shaping of values, identities and consciousnesses of rural people right up to the present day. However, reformulated ethnicised identities on the mine compounds do seem to have encapsulated a wider form of consciousness, with workers translating their rural cultural values - in tandem with ethnic stereotyping by white management - in a specific work context.

[44] See W. Beinart, 'Conflict in Qumbu', p.111. Also, C. Hamilton and J. Wright, 'The Making of the 'Amalala', *passim.*

the nienteenth century. This is not to reinforce the hypothesis that Mfengu in the Eastern Cape were really Xhosa opportunists. But it is possible that some Xhosa sought to gain this identity in order to survive the upheavals occuring at the time. Additionally, as illustrated above, Mfengu and Xhosa peoples had merged significantly by the mid-nineteenth century. In the Qumbu case, the Mfengu were therefore also a group which had been categorised from external sources. Categorisation was the result of the manipulations of colonial administrators, but it also came from the Mpondomise, who defined themselves against the Mfengu in order to assert their own identity within a changing social and economic situation, as well as the Mfengu themselves. This exactly reflects the moral debate around which moral ethnicity is centred.

Compound life entailed a move from putative kinship affiliations, or particularist rural ethnic identities, to a more specifically work-based reformulation of ethnicised identities. Wage labour offered a circumscribed independence to workers on the mines, and this partially challenged the leverage chiefs could exert on these men. Chiefs often initially supported the concept of migrant labour, as it gave them access to money with which to purchase guns and defend political independence. But by the end of the nineteenth century they had begun to lose control of the labour supply. Nevertheless men were still tied to the rural economy. Tactics such as bridewealth inflation ensured village elders and fathers controlled access to their sons' wages, and discouraged them from breaking with their rural links. Rural hierarchies also kept women entrenched in the countryside, another reason for men to return home.[45] Ideologies such as 'selective traditionalism', forged in a rural environment, additionally meant that men often wished to promote their rural connections. Wages in the mines were also relatively high in the nineteenth century, although this was to alter with the onset of more systematic segregation, and later apartheid.

In a series of works emanating from the early 1960s until the late 1970s, Phillip and Iona Mayer sought to demonstrate how migrant labour had affected the identities of Africans living in the Eastern Cape region.[46] Phillip Mayer also began to explore what he termed 'alternative routes to modernity' in the development of African moralities in the Eastern Cape and elsewhere, which he argued emanated from pre-colonial moralities, the differential incorporation of different African polities into the late nineteenth century colonial economy, missionary influence, and the uneven entrenchment of the migrant labour system.[47] He

---

[45] See B. Bozzoli, 'Marxism, Feminism and South African Studies', *JSAS*, Vol 9, No 2, 1983.

[46] P. Mayer, 'Migrancy and the Study of Africans in Towns', *American Anthropologist*, Vol 64, No 3, Part 1, 1962; P. Mayer, *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, Oxford, 1971 (2nd ed. 1st ed 1963); P. and I. Mayer, 'Self-Organisation Amongst Xhosa Youth, Vols 1 and 2', Unpublished Papers, Cory Library, Rhodes University; P. and I. Mayer, 'Socialisation by Peers', in P. Mayer (ed), *Socialisation: The Approach from Social Anthropology*, London, 1972; P. Mayer, 'Subculture, Moralities and Migrant Labour', Migrant Labour Mimeograph, Cory Lbrary, Rhodes University, 1978 (P. Mayer also edited the entire mimeograph); P. Mayer, 'The Origin and Decline of Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', in P. Mayer (ed), *Black Villagers*.

[47] See especially P. Mayer, 'Subculture, Moralities and Migrant Labour', *passim*. He specifically uses the phrase on p.33.

quotes a song composed by a Bhaca teacher in the 1950s which reflects these 'alternative routes' and identity formations:

> *We Bhaca are divided into three groups according to our manner of life.*
> *We get Christians, the middle ones who are clothed, and the pagans proper.*
> *The Christians are people of the Church, the middle ones are wanderers, the pagans have their own ways.*
> *Of these we prefer the last.*
> *The Christians cheat, some say they are converted, but it is not so;*
> *These middle ones are not wanted at all;*
> *The pagans are people of beer and beer alone.*
> *The middle ones do all these things.*
> *The Christians go after evil, yet are the great and important people.*[48]

This 'middle group' was argued by Mayer to represent an 'alternative route to modernity'. These groupings, or more accurately male associations, developed in areas of the Eastern Transkei and Zululand which had not been as greatly affected by the protracted colonial wars waged in the Eastern Cape throughout the nineteenth century. The areas concerned did not come under colonial rule until the end of that century. Thus men were drawn into migrant labour later than the Xhosa speakers to the west, and in the 1930s these areas still had fewer mission stations, schools and stores than the Ciskei or Western Transkei. The people living there, such as the Mpondo, Xesibe and Zulu, did not experience the deepening of the 'Red'/'School' division into a rift between 'national resisters and collaborators'.[49] All these factors combined to allow the formation of a new form of cultural male association which was equally unacceptable to christian converts and 'conservatives'. Such male associations tended to consist of young men, and sometimes older men in their thirties, who rejected rural 'School' christian morality, and the 'selective traditionalism' of 'Red' ideology. Referred to as *amagxagxa* in Zululand, and *indlavini* in the Eastern Transkei, their membership also largely consisted of migrant labourers who had experienced urban secular life-styles without interpreting them through the moral ideologies inherent in christian or traditionalist groupings. This was due to the historically contingent reasons outlined above. Associations such as these constructed their own moral universe, which debated the values of Traditionalist and

---

[48] Ibid, p.36.
[49] Ibid, p.p.33-34.

Christian groupings, and can be perceived as a reformulation of ethnic identities, intertwined with changing conceptions of manhood and possibly a nascent class consciousness. As such they represented part of an increasingly proliferating debate of what it meant to be a 'Zulu', 'Mpondo', Xhosa' or other ethnicised group. Again the concept of moral ethnicity provides a useful theoretical explanatory framework with which to view these identity reformulations.[50] Concepts of gender and ethnic identities, themselves inextricably intertwined,[51] were being increasingly debated in a fast-changing socio-economic climate. However, it is important to recognise that these rural, migrant forms of ethnicised identities could break down into identities which reflected a non-ethnic consciousness when transposed onto a more urban context. *Tsotsi* gangs, urban criminal gangs which formed in many urban areas by the 1940s, held loyalties to specific urban territories, having broken from rural ties.[52]

This is not to suggest that 'Red' (or 'School') ideologies were not themselves re-workings of rural identities. 'Red' Xhosa selective traditionalism was still a coherent ideological force in the 1970s, and even beyond in some isolated pockets of the Eastern Cape countryside.[53] 'Red' Xhosa adapted to migrant labour, either to the mines or elsewhere, through what Phillip Mayer has termed a process of 'incapsulation'.[54] The entrenchment of migrant labour meant that it became recognised as both necessary and a threat to 'Red' Xhosa culture, through the possibility of competing urban moral universes. Rituals and symbols were adapted to ensure that migrancy was interpreted through the ideological prism of 'Red' values. Male initiation ceremonies were adapted to warn initiates of the 'temptations' of urban life, and the need to be responsible and use their wages to build a homestead.[55] Beer drinks were also occasions which reinforced these ideological tenets. Young 'Red' Xhosa men were in effect perceived as entering a liminal phase when joining the migrant workforce.[56] It seems reasonable to argue that this was a re-working of one form of Xhosa ethnic identity, emanating from 'below', which sought to resist full incorporation into the capitalist economy. It demonstrates that

---

[50] This is a very brief summary of this form of identity reformulation, which relates very much to generational divides and the formation of youth gangs in rural, urban and mine compound situations in the first half of the twentieth century. Chapter 8 explores these issues at much greater length, whilst additionally illustrating their link to cultural issues such as the importance of circumcision initiation ceremonies, and male ethnicised violence. More recently Beinart has re-examined these types of rural identity reformulations. He has made use of the insights provided by the Mayers, whilst developing some of their conclusions. See for example the following: W. Beinart, 'The Origins of the *Indlavini*: Male Associations and Migrant Labour in the Transkei', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition in southern Africa*, Johannesburg, 1991; W. Beinart, 'Worker Consciousness, Ethnic Particularism and Nationalism: The Experiences of a South African Migrant, 1930-1960', in S. Marks and S. Trapido, *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism*, London, 1993. His insights will also be analysed in chapter 8. Beinart places more emphasis on varying levels of education in determining membership of such groups.

[51] See chapters 7 and 8.

[52] Again, see chapter 8 for a full analysis and periodisation of these associations, and their relationship to changing forms of male violence and identity.

[53] See P. McAllister, 'Using Ritual to Resist Domination in the Transkei', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition*. McAllister found elements of 'Red' ideology still surviving in 1989 in some areas.

[54] See chapters 1and 2.

[55] See the work of the Mayers quoted in footnote 46. Also chapter 8.

[56] See chapter 7 for the significance of liminality in shaping ethnic and gendered identities.

'traditional' cultures were just as capable of adapting to modernity, and indeed often emanated from it.

Identities on the mine compounds also reflected re-workings of male identities within a specific work-place context. Ethnic boundaries could be alternately fluid and hardened on the mines. Workers were often separated in ethnically segregated housing, according to mine management's perceptions of what entailed specific ethnic identities, although work teams remained ethnically mixed. For example Bhaca workers, who speak a dialect of Xhosa, could sometimes be housed separately or - as there were relatively few on the mines - could be classified as Mpondo or Xhosa due to linguistic similarities.[57] However, these imposed forms of identification were often accepted by the African workers themselves. Migrant miners often identified with home-friends on the mine, or in the absence of these, with people who spoke the same or similar languages, or perhaps with the most powerful group on the mine.[58] This reflects the somewhat situationally selected forms of ethnic identities prevalent in black communities in South Africa throughout the early colonial period.

Ethnic identities were also based upon putative physical and mental characteristics which made a specific ethnicised group more amenable to a particular type of job. For example, Bhaca workers developed a monopoly on night-soil removal and latrine cleaning. Mpondo often gained employment as drillers, 'Shangaans' often became 'boss-boys' and Sotho people often gained employment as lashers and shaft sinkers.[59] Ethnic stereotyping benefitted white management by facilitating control of the workforce. Dividing workers into discrete groups according to management's concepts of 'tribes' divided 'authority and privilege amongst members of different groups thereby diverting hostility towards management from other workers'.[60] However mine workers encouraged similar ethnic perceptions of themselves, but for very different reasons: 'in a situation of tremendous labour oppression...the propagation of ethnic ideas, and mobilisation of workers around them, was a means of protection, a qualified form of work satisfaction, and above all, a means of securing a greater income'.[61] These identities could lead to ethnic conflict between workers.

Nevertheless it is important to recognise that ethnic identification and violence on the mines cannot be reduced to a purely materialist analysis. As inferred above, rural ideologies and

---

[57] D. Moodie, 'Ethnic Violence on South African Gold Mines', *JSAS*, Vol 18, No 3, 1992, p.p.586-587. For other examples see the following: J. Guy and M. Thabane, 'Technology, Ethnicity and Ideology: Basotho Miners and Shaft-Sinking on the South African Gold Mines', *JSAS*, Vol 14, No 2, 1988; D. Moodie and V. Ndatshe, *Going For Gold: Men, Mines and Migration*, London, 1994; P. Harries, *Work, Culture and Identity,*

[58] D. Moodie, 'Ethnic Violence', p.586.

[59] Ibid, p.p. 586-588. Also see J. Guy and M. Thabane, 'Technology, Ethnicity and Ideology'. These ethnicised stereotypes, and their relationship with constructs of masculinity and ethnic violence, are explored in detail in chapter 8.

[60] J. Guy and M. Thabane, 'Technology, Ethnicity and Ideology', p.258.

[61] Ibid, p.266. Guy and Thabane are referring specifically to Sotho workers, but their argument also applies to most other ethnicised groupings on the mines. See D. Moodie, 'Ethnic Violence'.

socialisation processes - themselves being reformulated by the changes wrought through the migrant labour process - could play a significant role in the form of these conflicts.[62] It also appears that ethnic conflicts on the mines occurred at times of changes in the demographic make-up of the mine worker population, thus threatening job securities themselves often based upon ethnicised identities.[63] Additionally, ethnicised conflict seems to have become more widespread from the early 1970s onwards with the gradual emergence of worker consciousness:

> *The consequences of ritual collective violence have been less heinous in the past because management or South African Police could usually be trusted to intervene in the interests of order and traditional workers respected their intervention. In the particular juncture of the 1980s, with worker organisation finally coming to the mines, certain levels of management and police seemed to be willing to risk disorder in order to smash the Union's threatened new order.*[64]

Moodie also tellingly argues that if this was so, 'their purposes are well served by twisting traditional ethnic solidarities, which preserved personal integrity in the old mine culture, to new ends'.[65] This seems to represent another example of moral ethnicity hardening into a form of political tribalism, this time through the manipulations of mine management who politicised and rigidified previously fluid identities.[66] In addition employment of fully proletarianised workers from South Africa and Rhodesia in the 1970s, due to cuts in migrant labour from Malawi and Mozambique as a result of political decisions, caused conflict between this group - whose consciousness was shaped in an urban milieu and the liberation struggle - and migrant workers who were more insulated from these influences and were more accepting of mine authority.[67]

---

[62] Again, these issues are explored fully in chapter 8. Differing emphases on materialist explanations also differentiated the above works of Moodie and Guy and Thabane (see previous footnote). Guy and Thabane tend towards a very reductionist analysis which partially ignores, or rejects, other forms of influence in the shaping of ethnicised conflict. However Moodie, although still arguing for the ultimate primacy of a materialist interpretation, also emphasises the importance of rural ideologies and ethnic particularisms in shaping conflict on the mines. The latter interpretation comes closer to the line of analysis taken in this thesis.

[63] D. Moodie, 'Ethnic Violence', *passim.* Also see D. Moodie and V. Ndatshe, *Going for Gold.*

[64] D. Moodie, 'Ethnic Violence', p.613.

[65] Ibid, p.613.

[66] As is evident, I am utilising Lonsdale's concept of political tribalism in a wider sense in this context. He situates this form of ethnic identity firmly within the elite ethnic constructions of politicians and the state in general. But it seems to me that rigidified ethnicised identities could also occur due to the combination of mine management ethnic manipulation, the re-working of these identities by the workers themselves, and the exigencies of the changing socio-economic and political climate.

[67] For a detailed analysis of 'Red' ideology amongst 1950s Eastern Cape Xhosa, and how this articulated with migrant labour requirements on the mines, see P. Mayer, *Townsmen or Tribesmen.* Also chapters 1and 2.

Thus forms of moral ethnicity and political tribalism interacted, and became more or less apparent, at different times within the mining compounds. Furthermore this was linked to economic and social change within the wider South African context. Nevertheless it is important to stress that ethnic affiliations were not shaped solely by these factors. Gender divisions, the relationship between changing forms of masculine identity and violence, reformulated pre-colonial socialisation processes, generational divides, sexuality and patriarchy all played their part in the construction of ethnicity during the twentieth century. However, ethnic identities were forged very much within the changing socio-economic context of South Africa. This is especially evident in terms of the apartheid regime's 'Homelands' policy, forced removals, and shack city ethnicised identities.

3.3 Identities Imposed? The 'Homelands' Policy, Ethnicity and Political Tribalism

The histories of the creation of the 'Homelands' and those of the independent countries most closely linked with South Africa politically and economically - i.e. Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana - are closely intertwined from the late 1950s onwards. The 'winds of change' sweeping through Africa, with many black states on the verge of independence, and South Africa's long-cherished aim of absorbing the three British High Commission Territories (later Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana) obviously not achievable, entailed a radical rethink of apartheid policy with reference to the bantustans. 'Separate development' and self-government became the name of the game, as the Nationalist party sought to divert black political aspirations away from the key issue of control of the South African economic heartland. The apartheid regime also attempted to curry favour with an increasingly outraged international community (which nevertheless did not stop some from continuing investment in South Africa) by arguing that a policy of separate development would mean that the bantustans would essentially be no different from the High Commission Territories soon to gain independence. These so-called 'Homelands' were to be developed along 'ethnic' lines, with people re-located to a specific 'Homeland', which the government deigned corresponded with their ethnic identity and 'historic origin'. The 'Homelands' themselves were a development of earlier reserves, and therefore the re-located inhabitants built upon the substantial rural populations already living there. The importance of chieftaincies and 'tribal tradition' was therefore emphasised by Nationalist politicians. Ideas of 'tribe' and chieftaincy also had some attraction for African politicians uncertain about the possibility of real gains under apartheid. And there were significant legacies in popular consciousness which gave bantustan politicians some purchase. 'Separate development' policies entailed a further

overlay on the multiple layers of ethnic consciousness already discussed. It ensured a further rigidifying of ethnic identities, but this time - unlike on the mining compounds - it was directed from 'above' in terms of its political context, both by white ideologues and black politicians. It is this process of social engineering that illustrates most graphically the swing from moral ethnicity to political tribalism, and demonstrates the 'uniqueness' of contemporary South African history.[68]

This was certainly the case in the Eastern Cape. State manipulation of the chieftaincy, together with the intrigues of 'Homeland' politicians, did reinforce state aims of subverting African nationalism by transferring the locus of conflict from urban centres to the largely rural 'homelands'.[69] Inter-and intra-ethnic antagonisms resulted from the manipulation of the chieftaincy. In the Ciskei, Mfengu/Xhosa rivalry was deliberately manipulated by black ethnic culture brokers seeking to entrench their rule in the impoverished area. Mayer argues that this form of what he terms 'neo-tribalism' emerged as an unintended result of 'Red' ideology:

> *The Red ideology has also an 'illegitimate' offspring: the neo-traditionalism or neo-tribalism which uses traditional Xhosa symbols and the dancing skills of Red girls to legitimise the powers of the homeland chiefs, with support from sections of the new homeland middle classes...This use of 'Africanism' is an attempt to 'mask' the realities of conflict within the home-lands as well as the homelands' external dependence.*[70]

'Red' and 'School' ideologies were gradually eroding by the late 1970s, due to the effect of industrialisation and urbanisation.[71] The correspondence between the 'Red'/'School' divide and the Xhosa/Mfengu divide had also eroded through the second half of the twentieth century. No doubt this was due in part to inter-marriage and the erosion of boundaries. However, oral research conducted by Moyer in the 1970s suggested that Mfengu identity, when it was emphasised, was understood in a very fluid, prcessual sense anyway:

> *When questioning the people I encountered, it seemed as though an Mfengu might be any person who chose to iden-*

---

[68] The evolving, contested nature of Afrikaner ethnic identities, which are inextricably intertwined with the 'Homelands' policy, are examined in chapter 9.

[69] This objective was reinforced by allowing the development of decentralised industry along the borders of 'Homelands', serviced by a black labour force. The small black elite which governed these 'Homelands' also benefitted through the growth of bureacracy, another reason to support the aims of the Nationalist government.

[70] P. Mayer, 'Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', p.p.71-72.

[71] See chapters 1 and 2.

> *tify himself as such, or any person so recognised. This elusive definition allows an Mfengu to identify with the people amongst whom he lives when it is to his advantage, but it also allows their hosts to dissociate themselves from this individual when it is to their advantage.*[72]

This reflects the fluid, processual nature of the same identifications in the mid-nineteenth century. Mayer argues that many rural Africans vehemently rejected the hardened, politically tribalist versions of ethnic identification promulgated by 'Homeland' leaders and the apartheid state as representative of racist ideology rather than true cultural ethnicity.[73] Nevertheless rural values, often invested in the chieftaincy, still retained a pull on rural consciousness. The importance of remnant layers of popular consciousness in shaping any justification and support for the 'Homelands' policy and its attendent social engineering cannot be completely dismissed.

The 1951 Bantu Authorities Act and the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959 laid the basis for Mfengu-Xhosa politically tribalist rivalry. Both aimed at restoring a version of pre-colonial authority invested in the chieftainship, which would tow the line of the apartheid regime. Mfengu-Xhosa rivalry became particularly prominent in what was to become the Ciskei 'Homeland', due to the fact that there was a prominent Mfengu population there. The Transkei 'Homeland' only contained a small Mfengu population, and therefore political tribalism between Mfengu and Xhosa was not such a problem. In what was to become the Ciskei, the Mfengu felt particularly threatened by the restoration of the Rharhabe Xhosa paramountcy. It seemed to threaten their dominance in the bureaucracy and other professional salaried posts, a legacy of colonialism. Government appointed anthropologists, employed to trace genealogical lines in order to establish the 'proper' heirs to the chieftaincy, failed to recognise a paramount chief for the Mfengu.[74] This caused Mfengu elites to mobilise, resulting in for example the 1968 'Fingo Manifesto' which demanded the recognition of the Mfengu as a distinct ethnic group with representation in the Ciskei executive.

Ultimately, this conflict resulted in the formation of two political parties which divided along ethnic lines. The Ciskei National Party led by Justice Mabandla was Mfengu dominated, whilst the Ciskei National Independence Party, led by Lennox Sebe, sought to manipulate the

---

[72] R. Moyer, 'Some Current Manifestations of Early Mfengu History', *Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa*, Vol 3, 1971-2, p.144. Also see his thesis 'A History of the Mfengu of the South Eastern Cape, 1855-65', *Ph.D Thesis*, London University, 1976.

[73] It is important to bear in mind that, according to Mayer, both 'Red' and 'School' identities evolved into ideologies of resistance to white rule in the mid-twentieth century as well as representing what he termed 'folk cultures' - see chapters 1and 2 for further discussion.

[74] See T. Stapleton, 'Gathering Under the Milkwood Tree', p.p.21-22, and C. Crais, 'Representation and the Politics of Identity', p.p.104-109.

Rharharbe Xhosa vote. This politically tribalist rivalry also resulted in a plethora of historical reconstructions, which sought to place either Mfengu or Xhosa in a more favourable historical light, and further fanned the flames of ethnic tension. Middle class culture brokers sought to forge alliances with rural chiefs, who could often be the same people anyway, in order to promote ethnic messages. Although these forms of politicised ethnicity did not reflect the more rural, cultural, moral ethnic identities which existed particularly in the 1920s, they did gain some purchase among people competing for scarce resources in an oppressive political climate. It is also important to recognise that these forms of identity often resonated with peoples' moral universes anyway. Lennox Sebe made full use of identifications with chiefly lineages, real and imagined, in order to gain power in the Ciskei 'Homeland' in 1978. Although this involved much chiefly intrigue and political manipulation, there was popular support for various chiefs due to this pull on popular consciousness.[75] However, when Sebe tried to create a bogus Ciskeian nationalism once in power, thus rejecting ethnicised particularisms and chiefly loyalties, he failed miserably.[76] Imagined communities cannot be created out of thin air.[77] Sebe's bogus nationalism also had to contend with the widespread African Nationalist consciousness existing in the Eastern Cape, which had a legacy stretching back to the nineteenth century.[78] Nevertheless, these forms of politicised ethnicity resulted in an increase in politicised violence both in the Eastern Cape and elsewhere in South Africa. People mobilised under the ethnic banner in order to gain some material advantage as the apartheid system gradually collapsed during the 1980s.

3.4 Does the Model Fit? A Retrospective Overview of Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism, Within the Context of Twentieth Century South Africa

In a recent article Mosse has sought to define the relationship between nationalism and racism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[79] He argues that, although racism and nationalism seem to belong together today, this has not always been the case. Defining racism as a sharply focused faith which tolerates no ambiguities, and nationalism as more loosely constructed, making alliances with most nineteenth century ideologies (such as conservatism, liberalism and socialism), he states that racism was never an indispensible element of nationalism, but came to dominate it once the two had allied. Furthermore, this alliance occured due to the very fact that nationalism was/is an ambiguous, loosely

---

[75] See R. Moyer, 'some Current Manifestations', *passim.* Also J. Peires, 'Ethnicity and Pseudo-Ethnicity'.

[76] The reasons for Sebe's attempt at creating a Ciskeian nationalism are outlined In J. Peires, 'Ethnicity and Pseudo-Ethnicity'. In short, although it may partly have been an attempt to avoid ethnicised conflict, itself a result of the previous machinations of the chieftaincy by Sebe, it mostly involved an attempt by Sebe to further his own personal political power.

[77] For analyses of other forms of political tribalism in South Africa during the apartheid years, and their eventual demise with the collapse of apartheid, see the special issue of *JSAS*, Vol 20, No 3, 1994, especially the following: M. de Haas and P. Zulu, 'Ethnicity and Federalism: The Case of KwaZulu/Natal'; M. Lawrence and A. Manson, 'The "Dog of the Boers": The Rise and Fall of Mangope in Bophuthatswana'.

[78] See L. Switzer, *Power and Resistance*, Chapters 6, 8, and 9 for a useful synthesis.

[79] G. Mosse, 'Racism and Nationalism, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol 1, No 2, 1995.

constructed ideology, always looking for the defining difference between the nation from which it emanates and the 'Other':

> *Modern nationalism, even if it was tolerant and respected the culture of other nations, always contained elements which might lead to a greater exclusiveness. If racism constructed the ideal type, nationalism was sooner or later in search of the proper 'national character'.*[80]

This offers instructive parallels with the concepts of moral ethnicity and political tribalism. For, as has been illustrated, moral ethnicity - like the early forms of nineteenth century nationalism - is by its very nature ambiguous. It is an arena of constant debate with regard to what best represents the identity of a body of people, and therefore is also in search of the ideal type. Political tribalism, like racism, is unambiguous, certain, and allows for no debate over identity. It tries to be fixed and rigid. The alternating fluidity and rigidity of identities in the early twentieth century applies equally to other specific periods in South Africa's history. Furthermore, the critical nexus always occured when there was a particularly rapid period of social and economic transformation. This provoked the multilogue of voices inherent in moral ethnicity, a form of debate which engendered creative and transformative responses to change in itself - but never reached what seemed its ultimate goal of completely defining the 'ethnic character' of a specific people. In eras of rapid change, political tribalism offered a firm identity of almost religious intensity. It is also important to acknowledge that political tribalism was not just the invention of ethnic entrepreneurs, seeking to justify their privileged positions in a fast-changing society. Political tribalism grew as much from the moral ethnic debate taking place amongst the mass of the people, a debate which had the power to transform but also - due to its very ambiguity - contained the seeds from which political tribalism could grow. To argue that political tribalism did not grow from a populist base is to take away ordinary peoples' abilities to shape their own identities. This is not to deny the importance of ethnic entrepreneurs, rather it is meant to emphasise the point that the ideologies that these people espouse have to be rooted in popular consciousness.

The moral ethnicity/political tribalism model does seem a useful analytical tool with which to periodise ethnic identity formation in twentieth century South Africa. But it needs to be set firmly within an historical context, and without teleological assumptions. It would be wrong to assume, like many scholars have done, that ethnic identities will die out as a more global economy and society develop, and the ANC seek to promote their inclusive concept of African

---

[80] Ibid, p.167.

nationalism. For example, less than a year after the ANC were elected to power, there was a small outbreak of Mfengu politicised ethnicity in Peddie District, Eastern Cape. A small group of Mfengu people gathered under the same Milkwood tree where the Mfengu population of 1835 were said to have made their vows of promoting 'christianity, education and loyalty' under the influence of the missionary Joseph Ayliffe. The event went ahead despite the opposition of many chiefs who argued it would promote divisions amongst the local populace. The event itself was picketed by ANC Women's League protestors and the National Education and Health Allied Workers' Union. The celebration was attacked as divisive by the local ANC representative.

> *The secretary-general of the Peddie sub-region, Mr Xolisa Dimbaza, said claims that the celebrations were a cultural event were incorrect and went against the ANC's primary objective of uniting the African people. He supported the actions of ANC and ANC Women's League members who picketed the event...He said to revive the pledge to 'educate our children and uphold the principles of christianity and loyalty to the government of the day' was a counter-revolutionary practice. 'It is not one's culture to be exploited and oppressed. We therefore wish to warn those who want to climb to popularity and boost their unguided aspirations at the expense of our people.*
>
> *Our past grief, hardship and oppression must not be turned into fallacy', Mr Dimbaza said.*[81]

The Mfengu/Xhosa divide could therefore be resurrected despite the gaining of power by a democratically elected, African nationalist government. It is also interesting to note that the argument for going ahead with the celebration centred around the concept that the celebration was cultural, and not political, in content. However, if the event itself provokes politically motivated opposition, it must in itself become politicised. Dimbaza's terminology, especially his phrase 'unguided and counter-revolutionary', itself graphically illustrates that the ANC is not a homogenous nationalist force, for it sits uneasily with the moderate, 'pro-western' stance taken by Nelson Mandela.

---

[81] 'ANC in Peddie Slams Mfengu Event', article in *Daily Despatch*, Friday May 19th 1995. For a succinct summary of the main events and protests which arose around this renewal of the 1835 vow see T. Stapleton, 'Gathering under the Milkwood Tree'. It is also interesting to note that many of the participants in the celebration apparently wore academic gowns symbolising their academic achievements (p.2, ibid). This demonstrates the symbolic importance of clothing in representing reformulated forms of ethnic identification, and the merging of European and African symbolism.

The Comaroffs, although referring to a different context, reinforce this point.

> *Ideology may, of course, take many guises, narrative and nonnarrative, realistic or whimsical; it may be heavily symbolic, deeply coded; but at its root its message must be communicable. Hegemony...represents itself everywhere in its saturating silences or its ritual repetitions. It is on the middle ground between such silences and repetitions that human beings often seek new ways to test out and give voice to their evolving perceptions of, and dispositions toward, the world.*[82]

In terms of ethnicity, their interpretation of hegemony corresponds with political tribalism, and ideology with moral ethnicity. Peoples' moral universes seem to slide constantly between the two, and this is why ethnic identities are alternately fluid, rigid and ever-adaptable.

It does seem that the essence of twentieth century African ethnicity in South Africa centred around two opposing, but interlinked, poles - one originating from Africans themselves, and taking the form of moral debate (moral ethnicity); the other emanating from colonial invention of 'tribes' and mine management and missionary stereotypes (although actively participated in by black people), thus creating an external arena of inter-ethnic competition which encouraged rigidified identities and allowed for no debate regarding the content of ethnic identification (political tribalism). Periodising the moral ethnicity/political tribalism model demonstrates that politicisation of these identities occurs at times of rapid social and economic change.

---

[82] J. and J. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*, London, 1991, p.30.

4. 'INVENTION', 'IMAGINATION' AND 'REALITY': TERENCE RANGER AS A CASE STUDY OF CHANGING ACADEMIC APPROACHES TO ETHNICITY.

Chapters two and three have demonstrated the diverse approaches proffered with regard to the study of ethnicity. Differing concepts, definitions and paradigms have waxed and waned as academics from various disciplines have challenged previously held cherished assumptions, only to find their own theories debated and opposed. However academics (or at least some of them) do not leave their work in a theoretical brine of tradition. Theories and assumptions, like ethnicity itself, are reformulated constantly in the light of new research, and possibly reflect the social and political concerns of the time. In southern Africa, the rise of *Inkatha* in the late 1970s and the post-1980 civil conflict in Zimbabwe, has led to a plethora of new work on ethnic and nationalist identities, as well as re-workings and developments of older theories and studies of these forms of identification.

This chapter seeks to examine the theoretical developments in the work of Terence Ranger vis-a-vis ethnicity. The reasons for this case study are three-fold: firstly, Ranger's conceptual shift from 'invention'[1] to 'imagination'[2] provides a vivid example of the way studies of ethnic identities have reformulated in southern Africa. Secondly, Ranger has always argued that ethnic identities, at least in the African context, are a distinctly modern phenomenon, emanating primarily from the impact of colonialism onwards. Nevertheless he has recently examined identities existing before this impact in order to compare and contrast them to ethnic identities emanating in the colonial period. Thirdly, Ranger's depth and breadth of reading and research, his ability to 'soak up' and reformulate newly developed theories and ideas in novel and intellectually penetrating ways, and his willingness to change his theoretical approach in the wake of new research justifies a case study. His work regarding ethnicity provides further insights into changing academic approaches towards the subject, as well as a greater understanding of the phenomenon in itself. The context within which his studies of ethnic identities in Zimbabwe are set is also important. As with many other Africanist historians, he is always at pains to demonstrate that the Zanu/Zapu split emanating from the 1970s was not the result of some form of primordial tribalist conflict - an argument which gained popular currency amongst journalists and political commentators at the time, and which still fed popular misconceptions concerning the divisions and conflicts in Zimbabwe throughout the 1980s. The chapter is divided into three sections: a brief analysis of Ranger's work concerning ethnicity up to his chapter in *The Invention of Tradition*; a fuller analysis of the

---

[1] The term is taken from E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 1983.

[2] This term is taken from two sources: O. Vaughan and T. Ranger's co-edited work *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London , 1993, and Ranger's article 'The Invention of Tradition Revisited' in *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism. Occasional Paper 11*, Roskilde, Denmark, 1994. As both works provide the same auto-critique, I will draw upon the one in *Inventions and Boundaries* unless otherwise stated.

development of his ideas since then, and the sources he has drawn upon, and finally a critique of the theoretical assumptions he has developed in his conceptual shift from 'invention' to 'imagination'.

4.1 Ethnicities Invented: A Review of Terence Ranger's Early Work on Ethnicity.

Ranger's work has been concerned with ethnicity as a problematic area for academic investigation for approximately fifteen years.[3] The title of his article in Ross' 1980 edited collection-*Race and Tribe in Southern Africa: European Ideas and African Acceptance*-lucidly illustrates the particular theoretical stage Ranger's studies had reached at this juncture. Ethnic identities are very much portrayed as ideologically imposed from 'above', primarily by white colonialist administrators, urban employers and missionaries, and accepted by oppressed African populations. Ranger sets the scene for his approach to ethnic identities early in the article:

> *(S)cholarly literature has been oddly lopsided. Those writing about tribalism in the towns have focussed upon the utility of the concept of tribe to African migrant workers. They have seen urban tribalism as very much something constructed by Africans. On the other hand, those writing about the 'invention' of rural tribalism have stressed the crucial role of colonial indirect rule and divide-and-rule policies...I wish to explore urban tribalism in terms of manipulation by white employers. On the other hand, I wish to explore rural tribalism in terms of manipulation by particular African interests. When these two perspectives have been added to the two already established, we shall be able to see the diffusion of the ideas of tribe and race as a constant process both in town and country of interaction between Africans and Europeans - though always within a context defined by European power.*[4]

This presages Vail's approach to ethnic identity construction, much heralded as a major breakthrough in the study of Southern African ethnicities, by several years,[5] although John

---

[3] Two conferences were instrumental in initiating Ranger's work with regard to ethnicity (personal interview, Dec 1995): the conference held at the Leiden Centre for the History of European Expansion, Netherlands, in 1980-this gave rise to the book edited by R. Ross, *Racism and Colonialism: Essays on Ideology and Social Structure*, Dordrecht, 1982-and secondly, the conference which gave rise to Hobsbawm and Ranger's co-edited work *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 1983.

[4] R. Ross, *Racism and Colonialism*, p.124.

[5] See the introduction to L. Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, 1989.

Saul had already developed a similar approach a few years beforehand.[6] Ranger's article in *The Invention of Tradition* is set within a similar theoretical format. Africans are portrayed as accepting the boundaries of colonial classifications, this time not just within the realm of 'ethnicity', but also in terms of such criteria as reified customary law. However, there are differences. As Ranger states, the idea of African 'acceptance' of imposed colonial ethnic categorisations in the Ross article ' was perhaps an odd one for someone as closely associated as I had been with arguments for "African initiative", especially since a sense of ethnic *identity* (Ranger's emphasis) could hardly be simply imposed from outside or from above. There plainly had to be more than merely African "acceptance" '.[7]

Ranger's chapter in *The Invention of Tradition* attempts to approach this lacuna in his work. Here he takes up the theme of African 'collaboration' in the 'invention' of ethnicity, as well as other criteria such as customary law.[8] Ranger illustrates African agency in the invention of ethnicity, and there are marked similarities between these agents and Vail's concept of 'ethnic entrepreneurs' or 'culture brokers'. The emphasis is very much on African collaboration with what is portrayed as an all-embracing colonial hegemony. In his later auto-critique, Ranger has come to view this work as too polarised between flexible, indigenous African custom and rigidified, ossified, European imposed 'tradition':

> *I associated all the positive forces in African societies with custom and all the reactionary forces with tradition. The African agents of ethnicity were all those elements in southern African society of which I disapproved - chiefs against commoners, fathers against sons, patriarchs against wives and daughters. They had their own interests, of course, but these interests were compatible with colonial hegemony. Such collaborators were building up African patriarchy within the structures of European paternalism.*[9]

It is important to place Ranger's studies in *Racism and Colonialism* and *The Invention of Tradition* in their proper historical context, as well as recognising the constraints upon Ranger at the time of writing them. Ranger wrote both before he was able to resume his more

---

[6] See Chapter 2.

[7] T.Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition Revisited', p.26.

[8] Apart from demonstrating his conceptual shift from 'Invention' to 'Imagination', Ranger's above chapter in *Inventions and Boundaries* and his chapter in *Legitimacy and The State* provide an auto-critique of his works on ethnicity which is far more comprehensive than the short analysis provided in this chapter.

[9] T. Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition Revisited', p.26. Ranger is correct in criticising this polarisation. However, intertwining concepts of rigidity and flexibility are argued in chapter 3 of this thesis to be fundamental in the creation and 'imagination' of twentieth century Southern African ethnicities.

'microcosmic fieldwork' (his phrase) in Zimbabwe, after independence.[10] Subsequently, his ideas altered as will become apparent. Secondly, both works refer primarily to particular periods of colonialism - the 1930s and especially the period of early colonialism in the late nineteenth century. They do not focus on the Second World War and after. His piece in *Racism and Colonialism* focuses very much on urban and occupational ethnicities (despite claiming early in the article that he would focus equally on rural ethnic identities), and through the use of specific colonial sources demonstrates colonial pre-occupations with determining occupational status through 'ethnicised' ranking:

> *"The Fingoes", wrote Dr Hans Sauer, "are very intelligent and amongst the most industrious of our native races, with a Scots-man's capacity for making money". The Sotho were "the best class among the native tribes as agriculturalists and stock - breeders". The Zulus, on the other hand, were a "military race", displaying in the view of the Director of British Military Intelligence "a high qualification for a soldier's duty. Especially noteworthy is their inborn love of military exercises, their high courage and great power of endurance, and their loyalty to their leaders".*[11]

Ranger also demonstrates that colonial ethnicised stereotypes were often negative in content,[12] and illustrates how 'positive' ethnic stereotypes were often altered by colonial administrators, missionaries, employers etc. according to the social and economic dictates of the time, and African responses to them[13] He additionally concentrates on the articulation between colonially instigated ethnic categorisation in the urban field of employment, African acceptance and how this affected nascent worker consciousness (focussing particularly on the late 1920s/early 1930s). Ranger argues that Africans adopted these categories in order to obtain some measure of security in an extremely oppressive environment, thus hindering the possibility of a wider worker unity and often provoking 'ethnic faction fights'.[14] This conceptualisation of occupational ethnicities, with Africans internalising ethnic categories, presages much later work concerned with ethnicity and worker consciousness.[15] Thus Ranger argues that 'European ideas came to be adopted and made use of by very many Africans'.[16]

---

[10] Personal Interview, Dec 1995.
[11] R. Ross, *Racism and Colonialism,* p.p.121-2.
[12] Ibid, p.122.
[13] Ibid, p.128, for administrative reworkings of stereotyped Mfengu identities, in the light of Mfengu reluctance to work on Rhodesian mines at the turn of the twentieth century.
[14] Ibid, p.p.129-134.
[15] For example, see J. Guy and M. Thabane, 'Technology, Ethnicity, and Ideology: Basotho Miners and Shaft-Sinking on the South African Gold Mines', *JSAS*, Vol 14, No 2, 1988. Also, Chapter 8.
[16] R.Ross, *Racism and Colonialism,* p.122.

The Invention of Tradition concentrates very much on late nineteenth century European colonialism, a time which Ranger argues involved a great deal of 'invented tradition'. Harmonising with the other essays in the collected work, Ranger's chapter focuses particularly on the last three decades of the nineteenth century - a period when Europe itself was producing a plethora of its own 'invented traditions' at a time of rapid social and economic change.[17] This transposed itself onto Africa, as the colonial powers attempted to assert their authority through a hegemonic appeal to what they perceived as 'timeless' African 'traditions'. Ranger here develops the themes of his article in *Racism and Colonialism* to include African 'collaborators'. His concept of European imposition and African 'acceptance' is still apparent: 'The invented traditions of African societies - whether invented by the Europeans or by Africans themselves in response - distorted the past but became in themselves realities through which a good deal of the colonial encounter was expressed'.[18] However, there is much more emphasis on African collaboration in this work. The mechanistic assumptions contained in his article in *Racism and Colonialism*, where Ranger treats African 'acceptance' of ethnic categorisation as somewhat unproblematic, are challenged by this concept of 'collaboration'. These themes will be examined later, in the context of Ranger's later works. However, as mentioned earlier, the problem with this approach (as Ranger points out in his auto-critique) is that it polarises his argument between what he identifies as ' "admirable" flexible custom and..."deplorable" invented tradition'.[19] His views were to alter when he was able to resume his fieldwork in Zimbabwe. The following section analyses this change, as well as providing a critique of Ranger's most recent views regarding African ethnicity.

4.2 Imagined Ethnicities - The African Response: A Critical Analysis of Terence Ranger's Later Works On African Ethnic Identities.

Ranger was to resume fieldwork in Zimbabwe soon after he completed the above two studies. This led to the publication in 1985 of his work *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe.*[20] Although this study was not directly concerned with exploring ethnic identities as a problematic area for investigation, the data that Ranger gained from his fieldwork in Makoni

---

[17] Times of rapid, but incomplete, social and economic change often result in the production of 'invented traditions' and espousals of fixed ethnic categorisations, as people seek to reformulate their identities in order to achieve some form of psychological security. See chapter five for a fuller analysis.

[18] T. Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa', in E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, p.212.

[19] T. Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition Revisited', in p.26.

[20] T. Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerilla War in Zimbabwe*, London, 1985.

District was invaluable in shaping his ideas on the development of ethnic identities in Zimbabwe.[21] In fact, the data collected on Manyika identity was subsequently published in Vail's 1989 work.[22] Fieldwork data in Matabeleland also led to Ranger's 1985 article *The Invention of Tribalism in Zimbabwe.*[23] The resumption of fieldwork activity allowed a more sophisticated and subtle treatment of the intricacies of ethnic identity construction by Ranger than his earlier theoretical approaches, as he readily acknowledges.[24]

Ranger's switch to fieldwork within Matabeleland was largely due to the civil war raging at the time in Zimbabwe. Political commentators and journalists tended towards portraying the war as some form of ancient primordialist conflict between 'Ndebele' guerillas headed by Joshua Nkomo, and 'Shona' guerillas led by Robert Mugabe. This implicitly suggested that Africans were naturally 'tribal', which in turn fed into wider European racist assumptions and misconceptions. Ranger states at the beginning of his article *The Invention of Tribalism in Zimbabwe*, that he is writing explicitly in a double capacity - as a historian of Zimbabwe and as chairperson of the Britain-Zimbabwe Society in the United Kingdom.[25] The latter organisation aimed explicitly at countering distorted and misleading accounts of Zimbabwe, especially concerning the so-called 'tribal' divisions with which the British press became so pre-occupied when covering developments in the country.[26] The fact that he was now able to carry out fieldwork meant that he could counter these distortions through detailed historical research. The 1987-1988 Unity agreement between the Zimbabwean African National Union (Zanu) and theZimbabwean African People's Union (Zapu) was significant here, as it allowed more access to archives and documentation concerning Matabeleland and people were more willing to speak out in interviews.[27] The freeing up of Matabeleland archival material certainly benefited Ranger's work, allowing a more subtle treatment of Ndebele ethnic identities, and of other aspects of Matabeleland history.[28]

The Invention of Tribalism and his study of changing Manyika identities also sought to challenge African misconceptions regarding the causes of conflict. Many black Zimbabweans, including prominent politicians and political commentators, also advanced the argument that

---

[21] Personal Interview, December 1995.

[22] T. Ranger, 'Missionaries, Migrants and the Manyika: The Invention of Ethnicity in Zimbabwe', in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, 1989.

[23] T. Ranger, T*he Invention of Tribalism in Zimbabwe*, Gweru, 1985.

[24] Personal Interview, Dec. 1995.

[25] T. Ranger, *The Invention of Tribalism in Zimbabwe*, p.3.

[26] For two extreme examples cited by Ranger see *The Invention of Tribalism in Zimbabwe*, ibid.

[27] P. Kaarsholm, 'The Past as Battlefield in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe: The Struggle of Competing Nationalisms Over History From Colonization to Independence', *Societies of Southern Africa in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Vol 2, 1989.

[28] Personal Interview, Dec 1995. Ranger wrote a particularly interesting article which arose from his later work in Matabeleland. It investigates such diverse (but in this case integrated) themes as colonial conservation ideologies, environmental issues, ethnic identity construction, and the connection between land and myth: T. Ranger, 'Whose Heritage? the Case of the Matobo National Park', *JSAS*, Vol 15, No 2, 1989.

'tribalism' was endemic to the civil conflict. African political commentators additionally asserted that other conflicts were due to rivalries between Shona sub-ethnicities, such as Manyika and Karanga. In the introduction to his work on Manyika identities, Ranger refers to the Zambian government appointed international commission of inquiry, which reported on the murder of the Zanu chairperson Herbert Chitepo in 1976. The report claimed that Chitepo's death was the climax of a struggle for power between the Manyika and the Karanga. 'The victorious Karanga, now supreme in the party's command, had eliminated the Manyika Chitepo'.[29] He also cites further examples of Zimbabwean Nationalist politicians, the British press and even minority rights groups arguing that conflicts were fundamentally 'tribal' in nature. This fed directly into the Southern Rhodesian government's propaganda that black Zimbabweans were divided 'naturally' by 'tribe', and that this precluded the possibility of a workable African Nationalist government.[30] *The Invention of Tribalism* and the Manyika study sought directly to counter these misconceptions, and demonstrate both the historian and political activist inherent in Ranger. Both works additionally attempted to explain why so many black Zimbabweans had come to accept these politically manipulated forms of ethnic identity.

The resumption of fieldwork allowed Ranger to broaden and deepen his historical research methods. As he has recently stated, he prefers to initiate projects from fieldwork material, integrating comparative theory later(if at all).[31] This is reflected in his work on ethnicity. Ranger's article in *Racism and Colonialism* certainly seems a shift away from his previous 'African Initiative' approach to African history, promoting an image of colonial imposition of ethnic identities from 'above' and allowing little space for African participation. The article did allow for African appropriation of these identities, but always within the boundaries set by colonial classificatory systems. 'African Acceptance', rather than 'African Initiative' is the main theme of the article. The chapter in *The Invention of Tradition* attempted to rectify this lacuna, but with difficulty. Here the theme was one of 'African collaboration' with European imposed classifications. This is perhaps best exemplified by Ranger's description of the 'collaboration' between the Lozi chief Yeta, educated Lozi migrant workers, and the Northern Rhodesian colonial administration in inventing a Lozi monarchy in the 1920s and 1930s. The diverse interests of all three of these groups were served by this 'invention of tradition', and it contributed considerably towards crystallising a Lozi identity centred around the resurrected monarchy.[32]

---

[29] T. Ranger, 'Missionaries, Migrants and the Manyika', p.118. This comment is drawn directly from the Republic of Zambia's 'Report of the Special International Commission on the Assassination of Herbert Wiltshire Chitepo' (Lusaka, 1976).
[30] Ibid, p.p.118-119.
[31] Personal Interview, Dec 1995.
[32] T. Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa', p.p.240-243.

However, even here, African initiative was constrained by European classifications. Various African interest groups benefited from this 'invention', but themselves were involved in indirectly oppressing the mass of ordinary Africans, whilst still operating within the constraints of colonial ideology. Ranger sought to move away from this conceptualisation when he resumed fieldwork and became aware that ethnic identities were not solely imposed from 'above'. This is reflected particularly in his study of Manyika identity, which drew explicitly on the Makoni material. It is in this article that the conceptual shift from 'invention' to 'imagination' first becomes apparent. The article is also an excellent example of Ranger utilising fieldwork material to reformulate his theoretical understanding of ethnicity, and later reinforcing his findings through integrating comparative theory. In this work Ranger outlines the sub-ethnicities within the Shona community: 'Korekore', 'Zezuru', 'Karanga', 'Kalanga', and 'Manyika'.[33] He then concentrates on how a specific 'Manyika' ethnic identity was formed, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, through the moral debate produced by migrant workers and various missionary schools. Ethnic identities are perceived as far more flexible than earlier studies, and missionary language construction is shown to play a major role in defining them.

Ranger demonstrates that the development of Manyika ethnic identity was a response to socio-economic change during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Manyika are shown to be indistinguishable from other 'Shona' groups before 1890, sharing common language and cultural traits, but without a common Shona ethnic consciousness. However the linguistic codifications of mission stations led to a written Manyika dialect being established which, together with colonial manipulation of territory, forged a Manyika ethnic identity centred around this language standardisation. Other ethnicised identities, such as Karanga and Zezuru, were created in similar fashion. So far this does not differ from his earlier concept of 'invention' (apart from the stress on the importance of language in identity construction, which will be commented upon later). However, he then focuses on how the concept of 'Manyikaness' became contested by various African interest groups themselves - and not just in terms of reifying 'invented' traditions.

The earliest African converts to the christian message of these mission stations were essential in disseminating a common sense of Manyika identity where previously people identified with much smaller chiefdoms. They formed an early elite which articulated culturally brokered forms of ethnic identity in the wake of the language work of various missions. Thus a Manyika identity had been invented. However, the migrant labour process ensured that this identity remained fluid and processual, reflecting the socio-economic context of the times. Many migrant workers, after gaining an education through these missions and assuming a Manyika

---

[33] T.Ranger, 'Missionaries, Migrants and the Manyika', p.118. The following paragraphs summarise this work.

identity, went to work in South Africa. Migrant networks were slowly formed in the first few decades of the twentieth century, whereby established migrant workers sought to gain employment for newly arrived migrants. People who assumed a Manyika identity were able to forge a niche for themselves in the labour market as domestic servants and in hotels, due to their acquired literacy skills. European employers and administrators stereotyped people who assumed this identity as especially suited to this form of work, and therefore many sought to assume the identity even if previously they had not thought of themselves as 'Manyika'. Even people who had not converted to christianity sought to assume this identity as it provided a distinct advantage in gaining employment. 'Manyika-ness' was being re-imagined to reflect the conditions of the urban workplace.

Ranger also demonstrates how these migrants came into contact with organisations such as the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union and the Young Ethiopians through the course of their labour contracts. The radical ideas of these organisations merged with a sense of Manyika identity, and were disseminated back into rural areas, especially during the depression years dating from 1929, when many migrant workers returned home.[34] Rural christian educated culture brokers also sought to upkeep the Manyika identity in rural areas. Thus various African interest groups aimed at forging a 'Manyika' consciousness for their own religious, economic and political reasons. The invented identities emanating from mission codification of languages in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had been re-imagined by various African interest groups to reflect their own life experiences as they entered the labour market and a money economy. It was only during the 1930s that colonial officials and various christian missions sought to codify a standardised 'Shona' language, and thus forge a Shona identity. This was in order to provide avenues of common communication for government beyond the limits of dialect provinces, and to provide missions with the chance to extend their christian message in a more effective fashion. By the 1950s a specific Shona identity had emerged, with which many Zimbabwean African Nationalists identified.

However, facets of earlier identities, such as Manyika, died hard, and many missions and educated Africans fiercely resisted the merging of 'Manyika-ness' within a wider Shona identity. Ranger makes the point that these smaller ethnicised identities could still provide a rallying point in the Zimbabwean Nationalist struggle throughout the 1970s. Many exiled Nationalists grouped together under these identities. It was these remnant identities which were manipulated by ethnic culture brokers during these years, and which contributed to the death of Chitepo. Ranger thus demonstrates that Manyika identity never existed in an essentialist, reified form. It was a fluid and processual identity which was appropriated by

---

[34] For an analysis of how the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union sought to link working class interests with rural concenrs and ethnic identities see chapter 5.

various African interest groups throughout the twentieth century, reflecting the life experiences and meeting the needs of different people. It was only during the second half of the twentieth century that this form of fluid identity was manipulated by various culture brokers, and divided the Nationalist movement, precisely because these 'tribalist' politicians could play on the meanings these remnant identities still held for many people. A previously fluid form of Manyika identity had been expropriated to meet the requirements of ambitious politicians bent on pursuing their own political projects.

Through this work Ranger had moved away from a narrow concept of 'invented ethnicity' solely from 'above', and demonstrated - through the resumption of fieldwork - that the construction of identity is far more subtle and contested than he formerly portrayed it to be. In short, ethnicity could be 'imagined' and 're-imagined' in a contested socio-economic context. By doing so he also provides a riposte to those political commentators who argued that the Nationalist movement was riddled by primordial tribalist divisions which had existed in unchanged form for centuries. These findings also presage many of the theoretical paradigms - post-modern and otherwise - that emerged after Ranger had completed the fieldwork from which this article emanated. It is worthwhile examining these works and conferences, or at least the ones that influenced him, as it demonstrates how he is able to assimilate their theoretical tenets within his own developing theoretical approach vis-a-vis ethnicity - an approach which, since 1980, has been firmly grounded in fieldwork.

It seems reasonable to assert that one major conference and several published works influenced Ranger as he assimilated his fieldwork data for the Manyika article, and subsequently provided an auto-critique of *The Invention of Tradition.* The conference in question was the one held at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA in 1983,[35] and the published works are those of Benedict Anderson,[36] Steven Feierman,[37] John Wright and Carolyn Hamilton,[38] the various works of Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale,[39] and John and Jean Comaroff.[40] The ideas which emanated from the Virginia conference have already been analysed through the examination of Vail's work in chapter three, and will therefore not be reiterated here, apart from stressing Vail's emphasis on ethnicity as a modern phenomenon,

---

[35] Personal Interview, Dec. 1995. Leroy Vail's 1989 work, cited above, was the direct product of this gathering.

[36] B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, London, 1983.

[37] S. Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals*, Madison, 1990.

[38] There are several articles by these academics which influenced Ranger. See his auto-critique 'The Invention of Tradition Revisited', p.p.30-32, for a complete reference list.

[39] Again, see the above auto-critique for a complete reference list, p.p.33-38.

[40] John and Jean Comaroff, 'Of Totemism and Ethnicity: Consciousness, Practice and the Signs of Inequality'; first published in *Ethnos*, Vol 52, 1987, and subsequently as a chapter in the authors' joint work *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, Oxford, 1992. (specifically cited by Ranger in the above-mentioned personal interview, Dec. 1995). It is important readers recognise that many other works influenced Ranger in his conceptual move from 'invention' to 'imagination'. However, a comprehensive treatment of these would require far more than one thesis chapter. I have focused on the ones which most directly relate to Ranger's reconceptualisation of ethnicity within this context.

only emerging in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an hypothesis with which Ranger fully concurred. Benedict Anderson's work on the importance of language and what he termed print-capitalism was also very influential in the formulation of Ranger's theoretical approach as he assimilated his Manyika fieldwork data. Interestingly, Ranger turns Anderson 'on his head' in this article. Whilst gaining intellectual inspiration from Anderson's discussion of the interactions of language development and national feeling, he found that Anderson's concept of 'print-capitalism's' ability to create large unified languages from an oral multiplicity to be the reverse of the Manyika case.[41]

> *(Here) printing had actually broken up a common language into distinct and competitive dialects...Initially, the various churches were more concerned to Christianize intensively in their own particular zones than to create a territory-wide market for missionary literature. It was the use of literacy by labour migrants which linked this process with the industrial political economy.*[42]

Only from the 1930s onwards, as the state and various capitalist enterprises began to wish to reach wider markets with vernacular publications did a drive towards 'Standard Shona' begin.[43] Feierman's work was instrumental in refining Ranger's concepts of African peasant intellectual roles in defining ethnic identities. It certainly integrates with Ranger's concept of 'African initiative' in shaping their own history. The role of intellectuals in defining ethnic identities - and indeed, how one defines the term 'intellectuals' in this context - is important. Intellectual 'culture brokers' are perceived as an essential factor in shaping modern ethnic identities by many academics and Ranger is no exception to this perception.

The studies of Wright and Hamilton also contributed to Ranger's concepts of intellectual 'culture brokers', in terms of a pre-colonial ethnic identity construction. Additionally, the work of Lonsdale and Berman exercised considerable influence over Ranger, especially Lonsdale's concepts of moral ethnicity and political tribalism. It is easy to conceive why these terms integrated with Ranger's own approach to African history, and how it helped refine his conceptual shift from 'invention' to 'imagination': 'Lonsdale calls the colonial (and post-colonial) *invention* of ethnic groups and their exploitations as units of patronage political tribalism; the *imagination* by Africans of ethnic citizenship he calls 'moral ethnicity' '.[44] The

---

[41] T.Ranger, 'Missionaries, Migrants and the Manyika', p.142. For Anderson's concept of 'print-capitalism' see his seminal work *Imagined Communities.*

[42] T. Ranger, 'Missionaries, Migrants and the Manyika', p.142.

[43] Ibid. The importance of language in identity construction will receive a denser treatment in chapter 9.

[44] T. Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition Revisited', p.38.

concept of moral ethnicity restores African initiative to the forefront in shaping ethnic identities, without fully intertwining it with colonial classifications.[45] Finally, the work of the Comaroffs regarding ethnicity also influenced Ranger during the time they were all based at the University of Manchester - although this does not apply to their more recent research. Their article 'Of Totemism and Ethnicity' was especially important in giving Ranger's work an 'anthropological edge'.[46]

4.3 'Imagined' Ethnicities and Ethnicity from 'Below': Does Ranger's Theory Address the Totality of the African 'Ethnic Experience'?

The main issues requiring analysis with respect to Ranger's work are his assumptions that ethnic identities require intellectuals, of whatever hue, to formulate them, and that ethnic identities are a distinctly modern phenomenon. These two assumptions are now made by most academics concerned with the history of ethnic identity construction,[47] although Ranger's approach is particularly subtle and sophisticated. The shift from rural to urban environments, change in societal scale and differing gendered concepts of ethnicity are all demonstrated to be relevant in determining ethnic identities.

Writing about the formation of nationalist movements, the geographer Jan Penrose has posited the following theory regarding the relationship between culture and nationalism, and what elements are 'essential':

> (T)he *only constant seems to be the 'process' of category formation and the associated 'processes' of individual identity and group formation which generate a sense of belonging. It is these processes, and not any of their particular end products that human beings cannot do without...the power associated with culture as a particular way of life comes from appropriating the essentialness of the processes which give rise to it. This conception of culture is empowered by the inappropriate transfer of essentialism from 'processes' to 'select products' of these processes.*[48]

---

[45] These theoretical concepts are central to the theoretical thrust of the rest of this thesis.

[46] Personal correspondence and personal interview, Dec 1995.

[47] See the introduction to L. Vail's *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* and G. Mare's *Ethnicity and Politics in South Africa.* London, 1993, for just two of many examples.

[48] J. Penrose, 'Essential Constructions? The 'Cultural Bases' of Nationalist Movements', in *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol 1, Part 3, 1995.

Although her study is not concerned with African ethnic identities, Penrose's separation of the essentialness of the process of group formation, as contrasted to the constructed nature of the end product (a construction led by nationalist intellectual culture brokers) is useful in attempting to analyse whether 'passive' cultural ethnic affiliations did or do exist in Africa. Gerhard Mare's recent work certainly holds to the concept of the process of group formation as essential, or at least fundamental, to human existence.[49] This needs to be related to the 'primordialism/instrumentalism' debate, with specific regard to the African context. In his recent co-edited study with Olemi Vaughan, Ranger has grappled with this debate, and specifically with the theoretical tenets of Antony Smith. Smith provides more than a hint of primordialism in his assumptions. Ranger comments that Smith, who views ethnic affiliations as the 'primordial' base from which nationalism grows, must have found *The Invention of Tradition* particularly jarring, as it argued that ethnicity itself was an invented construct.[50] However (and this provides yet another example of Ranger taking on board, and reformulating, the criticisms of other scholars) Ranger does argue that there is a point to Smith's criticisms[51] of *The Invention of Tradition*:

> *Smith's challenge to Hobsbawm - what was there before nationalism in Europe? out of what did it grow? - can be turned into a challenge to Ranger. If ethnicity is recent in Africa out of what cultural material did it grow? What alternative forms of self- conscious identity preceded ethnicity and how were they constructed? If African states did not draw on ethnic solidarity for their legitimation, on what solidarities did they draw?*[52]

Ranger certainly doesn't fully analyse pre-colonial identities in his auto-critique of his chapter in *The Invention of Tradition*, an omission which he readily admitted at the time.[53] However, he has recently systematically dealt with this lacuna in his work, [54] again demonstrating his ability

---

[49] G. Mare, *Ethnicity and Politics*, p.p.7-8.

[50] T. Ranger and O. Vaughan, *Legitimacy and the State*, p.9. As mentioned in chapter 2, there occured a plethora of theories regarding nationalism from the mid-1980s onwards, and scholars concerned with the study of African ethnicity increasingly integrated these works - which had previously often run parallel to studies of ethnicity - into their own theoretical frameworks. Some of the most influential studies of nationalism are as follows: the work of Benedict Anderson (mentioned above); E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, London, 1983; E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*, Cambridge, 1990; A. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, 1986. Basil Davidson utilises some of these theories in the context of African nationalism in his *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State*, London, 1992.

[51] Ranger here is referring to Smith's critique contained in his article 'The Nation: Invented, Imagined, Reconstructed', in *Millenium*. Vol 26, No 3, 1991.

[52] T. Ranger and O. Vaughan, *Legitimation and the State*, p.9.

[53] Ibid, p.p.9-10.

[54] T. Ranger, 'The Nature of Ethnicity: Lessons From Africa', personal copy of lecture given at Warwick University, 1995.

to 'soak up' ideas and criticisms which might emanate from theoretical paradigms markedly different from his own. However, it is important to recognise here that the debate with Smith reflects Ranger's 'turn' towards a more post-modern analysis of ethnic identities.[55] This 'turn' can already be discerned in his earlier works, such as *The Invention of Tradition*, and indeed his most recent study is partly a response to a 'primordialist' interpretation of ethnic identities. It also reflects Ranger's attempts to move beyond the intellectual processes which underlay the production of ethnic units, the major focus of his recent works, and redirect attention to the great disruptions which colonialism wreaked on pre-colonial identities.[56] It is worth exploring Ranger's appropriation of facets of post-modern analysis, and comparing it to Penrose's concept of the 'essential' need for group formation. This comparative analysis allows a greater understanding of the complexities of ethnic identities, and facilitates a critique of Ranger's most recent hypotheses regarding the subject.

Smith has summarised the position of post-modern analyses of nationalism as follows:

> *Though nations are modern and the product of modern cultural conditions, nationalists who want to disseminate the concept of the nation will make liberal use of elements from the ethnic past, where they appear to answer to present needs and preoccupations. The present creates the past in its own image. So modern nationalist intellectuals will freely select, invent and mix traditions in their quest for the imagined political community.*[57]

With some modification, this interpretation can be applied to Ranger's analysis of southern African ethnicities. Certainly the concept of ethnic identity as a relatively recent phenomenon, and the requirement of intellectual mobilisation, are readily apparent in Ranger's work. This is evidenced by the above quoted examples of Lozi and Manyika identities. However, Ranger's approach differs in terms of his theoretical shift from 'invention' to 'imagination'. For this involved different types of intellectual 'ethnic entrepreneurs'. This theoretical shift does not involve a complete break from the concept of 'invention'. Rather, as Ranger has recently

---

[55] This 'post-modern' turn is not to suggest that Ranger has forsaken historical narrative. He vigorously defends the latter in a paper presented at Edinburgh University: 'Africa in the Age of Extremes: The Irrelevance of African History', Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, May 1996.

[56] Ranger refers to this lacuna in his work in the following: T. Ranger, 'Colonial and Postcolonial Identities', in T. Ranger and R. Werbner (eds), *Postcolonial Identities in Africa*, London, 1996, p.274. The attempt to address this issue may well have been partially provoked by J. Ajayi's following criticism of Ranger's concepts of 'invention' and 'imagination': 'as we focus more and more on the 'discourse' of invention and imagination, we move further and further away from the reality of the problem of what nourishes, and what undermines, the legitimacy of the state in Africa'. (J.F. Ade Ajayi, Book Review of T. Ranger and O. Vaughan (eds), *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth Century Africa*, in *JAH*, Vol 34, No 1, 1993. If so, this reflects another example of Ranger's ability to take on board the criticisms of other scholars.

[57] A. Smith, 'Gastronomy or Geology? The Role of Nationalism in the Reconstruction of Nations', in *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol 1, Part One, 1995.

argued, the term 'invention' applies to a particular period (the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) when European colonialists were imposing 'invented' traditions in order to gain an hegemonic hold over African societies. Ranger still maintains this argument vis-a-vis the genesis of African ethnic identities, but views his concept of the 'imagination' of ethnicities as a development of this theme. 'An invention may take some time to develop but, once made by the individual or team who have been working on it, all that is left is to apply for a patent. It is a term which makes little allowance for process, for the constant reworking of identities and the steady transformation of institutions'.[58]

Apart from the Manyika example this processual development is demonstrated in Ranger's recent reworking of ethnic construction in Matebeleland. As Ranger states, his 1985 pamphlet *The Invention of Tribalism in Zimbabwe* concentrated on how there emerged an alliance between European administrators and Ndebele *indunas* (supplemented by the ideological work of mission educated Ndebele intellectuals) in terms of ideologically forging a particular Ndebele identity in the first half of the twentieth century. In simplified terms, this identity construction aimed at propping up European hegemony. Many *Indunas* participated in this ideological construction, partly to avoid a restoration of the Ndebele monarchy, which would directly threaten their social status. Here, the theme of 'collaboration', so prominent in *The Invention of Tradition,* is readily apparent. Ranger's later work, however, has demonstrated how this form of identity was reworked (re-imagined) by a different set of intellectuals, such as Joshua Nkomo, who simultaneously aimed to revive Kalanga cultural nationalism whilst assuming leadership of the Matabele Home Society, 'which was defining a broader, more inclusive Ndebele identity'. By this time, two particular studies by Fields and Ekeh had considerably influenced Ranger's theoretical approach.[59] Both these works stressed the partial nature of colonial hegemony, allowing Africans some form of autonomy within the colonial ideological framework imposed on them. In this later work, Ranger also argues that conservation and betterment policies - involving massive destocking and movement of people - alienated Ndebele chiefs 'and drove them and their people into an alliance with the urban political spokesmen of the wider Ndebele identity'.[60] The central role of intellectual 'culture brokers' remains a central theme throughout Ranger's developing theoretical approaches however, and his most recent study to date concerning ethnic identities still stresses their relatively recent origins.[61]

---

[58] T. Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition Revisited', p.23.

[59] K. Fields, *Revival and Rebellion in Colonial Central Africa*, Princeton, 1985, and P. Ekeh, 'Social Anthropology and Two Contrasting Uses of Tribalism in Africa', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol 32, No 4, 1990. Field's work has been particularly influential on Ranger's later theoretical developments, and not just within the realm of ethnicity. For example, her work has been a major factor in respect of his reconceptualising the relationships between anti-colonial resistance, African religious movements and African nationalism; see T. Ranger, 'Religious Movements and Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa', *African Studies Review*, Vol 29, No 2, 1986. This article also indirectly stresses the localising and ethnicising effect of partial colonial hegemony.

[60] T. Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition Revisited', p.42.

[61] T. Ranger, 'The Nature of Ethnicity', *passim.*

Ranger sets out to address systematically pre-colonial identities in African societies, and to demonstrate that most were not ethnic constructs, but consisted of other forms of identification. He situates his argument in the context of a debate with a 'moderate' form of primodialist theory, embedded in the 'givens' of 'congruities of blood, speech and culture...common blood, kinship and belief'.[62] In response to these assumptions, Ranger sets himself the task of answering the following questions: 'If these amounted to ethnicity, how could I claim that it was recently invented? And if they were not the ingredients of ethnicity, what identities did they underlay?'.[63] The next nine pages of the article are then devoted to dismissing these 'givens' as necessarily associated with ethnicity, whilst constructing an argument concerning what forms of identity did exist in Africa before colonialist penetration. Thus Ranger responds in this paper to the earlier mentioned critique of Smith.

Utilising, amongst others, the recent work of Robert Shell on eighteenth century Cape families, Ranger argues that kinship was not necessarily connected to ethnicity, and led to other identities. Family was/is a social construction and metaphor, which has often been used in Africa 'to bind together in defined relations of inequality people of many different origins'.[64] Ranger eventually concludes this first section of his article on pre-colonial African identities as follows:

> *African identities were given by and expressed in place, household, connection, occupation, polity, cult, status - much like European identities in the medieval and early modern period ...Early modern Europeans who visited Africa were able to take these familiar identities seriously; later modern Europeans needed to find ethnicity.*[65]

He then analyses the effect such criteria as the uneven penetration of the capitalist economy, missionary codification of language, competition for scarce resources, and not least colonial paranoia as major contributing factors in the construction of African ethnic identities, together with identity construction by African intellectuals and ordinary Africans' appropriation of these identities.[66] In other words, 'invented' ethnic identities became 'imagined' ethnic identities.

---

[62] Ibid, p.1.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid, p.3.
[65] Ibid, p.9.
[66] Ibid, p.p.9-14.

The article therefore gives a picture of alternating fluidity and rigidity with regard to African identities. Pre-colonial identities are portrayed as fluid, processual, constantly changing[67], and this only altered with the onset of colonialism and capitalist penetration which for various reasons rigidified identities in an ethnicised sense. However, this hegemonic rigidity was not all-encompassing, and Africans were able to 're-imagine' their ethnicised identities - albeit within the confines of colonial imposed boundaries. This of course is not to suggest Ranger was arguing that Africans thought of themselves constantly in an ethnicised sense from colonialism onwards. Rather that many fluid aspects of their identities had now been codified and rigidified in a rigid, 'ethnic' format. Ranger again utilises Lonsdale's twin concepts of political tribalism and moral ethnicity in order to facilitate conceptualisation of these changes, thus demonstrating that state imposed, rigidified manipulation of ethnicity 'from above' was not the only form of ethnicity. Moral ethnicity, with its fluid, processual nature (echoing Penrose), illustrated African's own autonomous contributions to what exactly ethnic identity entailed albeit within colonially defined ethnic boundaries. He also reiterates his argument that ethnic identities did not necessarily arise from colonialism, referring - as in his earlier auto-critique - to the case of 'the Zulu'.

It would seem therefore that, with this article, Ranger has developed a theoretical conceptualisation of African ethnic identities which fully addresses the criticisms of his earlier approaches to the subject. It suggests a considerable change in Africans' consciousness, from fluid, processual forms of identity to codified, rigidified formats. His argument is certainly very convincing. There is no doubt that a plethora of different identities arose (if slowly and unevenly) in the wake of colonialism and capitalism, including class, gender and generational identities as well as ethnicised ones. Additionally, as ethnic identities cannot be separated from other forms of identity (see following chapters) it is easy to conceive of the huge array of identities and moral discourses which arose in the wake of these changes. The influence of the Comaroffs is readily apparent in this article, especially their work 'Of Totemism and Ethnicity', originally published in 1982 and very influential upon Ranger at that time as well as in his latest article. The Comaroff piece allowed Ranger to explore in more depth the relationship between culture and ethnicity, both in terms of colonially induced change or, in the case of the Zulu, from African societies themselves. Arguing that it is possible for ethnicity to emerge 'wherever there are relations of inequality and exchange accompanied by intellectual assumptions of cultural and somatic classification', [68] Ranger comments thus:

---

[67] Ranger draws on an impressive array of academic works in order to reinforce his argument. For example he utilises the following in order to demonstrate the socially constructed nature of 'family' in order to refute the argument of 'blood' or genes as a 'given' of ethnic identity: R. Shell, *Children of Bondage*, Johannesburg,1994, K. Dike, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta, 1830-1885*, Oxford, 1956, J. Miller, *Ways of Death*, Wisconsin, 1988. For the fluidity of pre-colonial language he draws on the work of A. von Oppen in J. Heidrich, *Changing Identities. The Transformation of Asian and African Societies Under colonialism.* (Center for Modern Oriental Studies, 1994). He also argues for the fluidity of pre-colonial religions, drawing on the many of his own works concerned with this field. One can't help feeling, however, that this concept of fluidity has been oversimplified, as will become apparent later in the chapter.

[68] Ranger, 'The Nature of Ethnicity', p.10.

"In systems where 'ascribed' cultural differences rationalize structures of inequality", write John and Jean Comaroff, "ethnicity takes on a cogent existential reality. It is this process of reification that gives it the appearance of being an autonomous factor in the ordering of the social world. As a result, ethnic identities regularly assume, for those who share them, a pervasive functionality in everyday social, economic and political life".[69]

The Comaroffs have further explored what they aptly term 'the colonisation of (African) consciousness' in their collected work *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, which seems to reinforce Ranger's conceptualisations. Examining the impact of missionaries upon Tswana consciousness in the nineteenth century, they comment:

> *for the Tswana, the encounter with a people preoccupied with techniques of self-representation and rationalisation brought forth a sense of opposition between 'sekgoa' (European ways) and 'setswana' (Tswana ways). The latter was perceived, for the first time, as a coherent body of knowledge and practice in relation to the former, which they had learnt to see as a system of 'belief'...In this moment of self-objectivication, we suggest, lie the cultural origins of modern Tswana ethnicity. For, until this time, 'the Bechuana' - who had no names for themselves, other than 'batho', human beings - were divided into political communities distinguished by their totemic affiliations, a quite different form of collective consciousness.*[70]

Thus, over a period of time, the Tswana became aware of the 'colonisation of their consciousness' and reformulated their identity accordingly - and in an ethnicised sense. The Comaroffs also seek to explain most pre-colonial African identities by what they term 'totemic consciousness'.[71] Again, the break with the pre-colonial past is stressed, something which seems at the centre of Ranger's conceptualisation of ethnic identities.

---

[69] Ibid.
[70] J and J Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, Oxford, 1992.
[71] Ibid, P.51.

The long standing historical conundrum of what matters more - 'continuity' or 'change' - is never more apparent than in the study of ethnic identities. Ranger certainly perceives a fundamental 'break' with the pre-colonial past, a conceptualisation common with most recent radical historical analyses.[72] Intellectual 'ethnic entrepreneurs', or 'culture brokers' are also still seen as an indispensible ingredient in ethnic identity construction. However, it is important to question whether constructionist theories of ethnic identities provide a complete, comprehensive explanation of ethnicity's genesis and, just as important, how these identities were, and are, perceived by the historic actors involved. Anthropology has grappled with this conceptual conundrum for sometime, referring to historical and social actors' concepts of themselves as *emic* categories of ascription, whilst the analyst's concepts, descriptions and analyses are referred to as *etic.* This distinction is of vital importance. For it is precisely in terms of how people perceive themselves that the roots of ethnicity lie. If people believe in a particular self-identity, it is real in its consequences. Although not dealing specifically with ethnic identities, Karen Fields has stressed the importance of recognising this distinction in her study of colonial central Africa.[73] In his recent debate with the primodialist approach, Ranger refers to the argument that 'what is real in the mind is real in its consequences'.[74] Ranger accepts this, but then proceeds to argue that the acceptance of ethnic consciousness by the mass of the people, and its consequent 'reality', is initially constructed by 'culture brokers' (both African and European) within the confines of capitalism and colonialism.

This brings us back to the argument of Penrose. It is necessary here to emphasise my assumption of a fundamental 'need to belong' amongst human beings, and that this identity has to be defined vis-a-vis the 'Other'. This identity is vocalised through cultural bases, which are not 'essential' in themselves (and are in fact socially and historically contingent, as constructionist historians argue). However, and this is also of crucial importance, the construction of these bases are 'essential'. People need to classify in order to make an ordered sense of the world. It is peoples' understanding of their ethnic identity within these constructions that need to be understood, in order to gain a greater understanding of ethnicity. This is where the work of such as the Mayers is so useful, for they allow people to vocalise exactly what their identity means to them. Constructionist approaches, whether those of Anthropology, History or any other discipline, even the most empathetic (such as those of

---

[72] See L.Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism*, to which,as has been mentioned, Ranger contributed. See also chapter 2.

[73] K. Fields, *Revival and Rebellion in colonial Central Africa*, Princeton, 1985. Fields' work influenced Ranger's developing analyses of ethnicity, religion and identity. This is acknowledged in both his auto-critique mentioned above, and his 1985 article 'Religious Movements and Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa', in *African Studies Review*, Vol 29, No 2. Both these works should be consulted in order to understand the influence of Fields upon Ranger's work. It is interesting, however, to note that, although Ranger places great stress upon the importance of this work (amongst others) in shaping his own conceptualisations, they do not seem to have altered the fundamental tenets of his own constructionist analysis. Ethnic identities are still generated from the impact of colonialism, and constructed by intellectual 'ethnic entrepreneurs'. This begs the question of whether Ranger - rather than directly debating with works that have in some way questioned his approaches - has reformulated them within the confines of his own conceptual approach.

[74] T. Ranger. 'The Nature of Ethnicity', P.12.

Ranger), cannot fully realise, or accept the 'reality' of peoples' own identities as the very nature of constructionism means that that this 'reality' has to be dismantled. Take for example the stress placed on intellectual 'culture-brokers'. This immediately begs the question 'what is an intellectual?', and furthermore 'who is defining this grouping?'. Ranger sees intellectual 'culture-brokers' as essential in the construction of ethnic identities. But is this social grouping perceived in the same terms by the ethnicised group in general? And if not, whose definition is to be taken as correct?

There is a recognition of the need for elite and 'mass' group needs to articulate, and for a grounding of ethnic identities within the social realities experienced by the group in question. The problem is that, by the very nature of constructionism, the group's social reality as experienced by that group is not fully taken into account, due to the very fact that many constructionists disassemble realities in order to reveal their constructed nature. Thus there has to be an 'elite group of culture-brokers' as separate from the 'mass' of the people (although I accept that this 'mass' is not perceived as homogenous by constructionists - divisions in terms of class and gender are taken into account). What is not taken completely into account is how this elite group is perceived by the rest of the people in question. Certainly Shula Marks found that the group of culture brokers who forged the first *Inkatha* movement were not that divorced from the remnants of the pre-colonial consciousnesses exisitng among the 'mass' of the rural Zulu people.[75] Ranger is fully aware of the need to define 'intellectual culture-brokers' within the parameters of constructionist analysis, recognising the contribution of both mission-educated literates and rurally-based 'culture-brokers' such as diviners and local high-priests.[76] He views the fusion of the two as important in constructing ethnic identities, although with the majority of the ideological input emanating from the former category. But it is necessary to question how much Africans perceived these groupings as in some way separated categorically from other sections of the population.

It is also important to recognise that culture does not equate with ethnic group. Culture transcends ethnic boundaries. As the Kriges state with regard to Lovedu society 'culture elements, culture patterns, and the major cultural configurations do not stop short upon the borders of districts, nor of tribes, nor even of culture areas'.[77] Furthermore, ethnicity is produced through group contact. A cultural group cannot be defined as ethnic in isolation. It needs to be able to define itself against another. Ethnic identities are formed when two groups have a minimum of regular interaction, and perceive themselves to be culturally distinctive. Furthermore, as the rest of this thesis will demonstrate, politicised ethnic identities form in the context of competition for scarce resources, where perceived cultural differences might be

---

[75] See chapter 5.

[76] Personal Interview, Dec 1995. See also his auto-critique *The Invention of Tradition Revisited.*

[77] E. and J. Krige, *The Realm of a Rain-Queen: A Study of the Pattern of Lovedu Society*, Oxford, 1965.

emphasised for political and economic advantage. In one sense ethnicity can be perceived as the politicisation of culture. Ranger certainly acknowledges much of this. For example, he argues that there were wide networks of trade and religious interaction amongst pre-colonial societies, which were feared by the colonial powers as potential settings for anti-colonial rebellion. Thus they reified and rigidified 'tribal' boundaries and appropriated chieftaincies to reinforce colonial rule.[78] It is easy to conceive of these wide-ranging pre-colonial networks facilitating the transcendence of cultural traits over the boundaries of 'tribe'. However, Ranger still does not explore what the significance of cultural traits were to the people involved. Therefore, he does not analyse their significance in determining African identities when the colonial powers rigidified 'tribal' boundaries. The significance of these traits also need to be recognised in the shaping of ethnic identities in the era of post-colonialism, and the subsequent rise of nationalist consciousness.

The relationship between culture and ethnicity requires further analysis. As Eriksen states, whereas there is a mass of studies available 'which deal with power inequalities, the social reproduction of group boundaries, group competition and political identities, the "cultural stuff" that the boundaries contain...has not been granted proportionate attention'.[79] He points, for example, to the stereotyping of ethnic Gypsies by Europeans as unclean and dishonourable. This cannot be understood in terms of competition or domination, but rather in terms of encounters between cultures. These issues are certainly not addressed by constructionist historians such as Ranger, due in no small measure to the risk of reifying cultural difference and indigenous stereotypes. Ranger provides a comprehensive historical analysis of the social, political and economic factors involved in the shaping of ethnic identities but, due to his understandable wish to avoid reinforcing, and desire to challenge, 'primordialist' interpretations, he seems to avoid emphasising the cultural factor. This is even more understandable in the case of South Africa, where the former apartheid regime reified supposed cultural difference to such an extent. However, the time is ripe for a reappraisal of the influence of culture in shaping ethnic identities. This is not to suggest a primordialist interpretation. Rather, an analysis of the cultural input into Southern African ethnicities would seem to suggest a way forward in understanding what ethnic identities mean to the people who adhere to them, and whether they exist at another conceptual level which is not situated in the political sphere. Anthropological studies of African identities would seem to offer a rich field of material in promoting this endeavour, and the rest of the thesis will utilise their insights, whilst situating them in their social and historical contexts.

---

[78] T. Ranger. 'The Nature of Ethnicity', P.12.

[79] T.H. Eriksen. *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, London, 1993, p.136.

5. THE RE-EMERGENCE OF THE 'WARRIOR NATION': THE WORK OF SHULA MARKS AND THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF TWENTIETH CENTURY ZULU ETHNIC IDENTITY.

This chapter has a dual purpose. Firstly, it aims to critically analyse the historical development of Zulu ethnic nationalism in the twentieth century. Zulu ethnicised identity has acquired a special significance in the unfolding of twentieth century South African history, especially in the last two decades. The emergence of the second *Inkatha* Zulu cultural movement in the 1970s, its subsequent politicisation and espousal of ethnic Zulu nationalism, and its contrast with the broader conception of a pan-African nationalism promoted by the ANC, has played a major part in the increasing violence which marked the early transition from apartheid. The historical growth of Zulu political tribalism requires critical analysis in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of politicised ethnicity in contemporary South Africa. Secondly, threaded throughout the chapter is an analysis of the works of Shula Marks, an historian who has provided many significant studies of the development of Zulu politicised identity in the twentieth century. Although receiving her initial training as an historian in South Africa, Marks later emigrated to Britain where she established an important centre for the study of southern African studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Her stress on the importance of African agency in the construction of southern African history has meant that her work illustrates Africans' own initiatives in the construction of ethnicised identities. She therefore avoids the pitfalls of earlier marxian works which placed primary stress on colonial 'divide and rule' policies and the later machinations of the apartheid state in socially constructing ethnicity. Hence her work has similarities with the moral ethnicity/political tribalism model although there are differences. She also provides further insight into how academics have changed their conceptualisations regarding ethnicity over time.

5.1 Shula Marks and Zulu Identity in Pre-Apartheid Twentieth Century South Africa

The nineteenth century Zulu kingdom founded by Shaka was fundamentally destroyed by the civil war which raged in the region between 1879 and 1884, itself a consequence of British colonial interference and the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879.[80] The ill-fated Bambatha Rebellion of 1906 emphasised the futility of armed resistance to colonial rule.[81] Radical marxian analyses of Zulu ethnic identities argue strongly that the uneven incursion of a capitalist economy, and the migrant labour process, which increased considerably as the pre-colonial Zulu kingdom disintegrated, mark a fundamental fault-line in the development of twentieth century Zulu ethnicity. The work of Shula Marks is firmly situated within this school. Nevertheless, her stress on the importance of African agency in the shaping of South African history allows for

---

[80] See J. Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom: The Civil War in Zululand, 1879-1884*, London, 1979.
[81] See S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion: The 1906-8 Disturbances in Natal*, Oxford, 1970.

Africans to shape their own identities in a rapidly changing socio-economic climate, although she still seems to place primary emphasis on the political machinations of an elite group of culture-brokers in terms of the creation of twentieth century Zulu ethnicity.[82] This does not allow for a complete examination of what identification with Zulu politicised ethnicity meant for the mass of the ordinary people who adhered to this particular identity.

Marks began to emphasise the importance of African agency early in her academic career. This is particularly apparent in a book review written in 1970.[83] The article covers two major historical works which had recently been published: M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds), *The Oxford History of South Africa to 1870*, Oxford, 1969, and C.F.J. Muller (ed), *500 Years: A History of South Africa*, Pretoria and Cape Town, 1969. By comparing the two, Marks illustrated the failure of studies such as that of Muller which fail to consider black Africans as part of the history of South Africa. Some of the themes which later dominate Marks' research on ethnicity and nationalism are apparent in this article. For example, she argues that Muller's edited work is a prime example of Afrikaner historiography in that it ignored the fact that South African history was shaped by the interaction of the diverse peoples living there, whilst *The Oxford History* argues that interaction is the main linking theme in South African history. The interaction between the various peoples sets the boundaries for ethnic and nationalist identities. Linked with this theme, Marks also argues that there are many similarities between the historical development of Afrikaner and African communities. She develops this hypothesis considerably in her later studies when her attention shifts more systematically to the study of ethnic and national identities. The importance of African resistance to early colonial and Afrikaner incursions in shaping African identities and communities is also discussed, and this is also a major element in the development of more explicit national and ethnic identities amongst African peoples in twentieth century South Africa. She also demonstrates the power of rumour and myth in constructing the African 'Other' amongst colonial societies. This is particularly apparent in her study of the 1906 Bambatha Rebellion.[84] However, there is much more to the formation of ethnic and nationalist identities than representations and constructions of the 'Other', be that through the construction of knowledge by colonial intellectuals and politicians, or through the fears and hostilities of early settler societies themselves. This becomes increasingly evident in Marks' work. From the 1970s onwards, she was concerned with far more than representations of identity. She also

---

[82] This is despite the fact that Marks stresses that awareness of an ethnic identity does not necessarily need to originate from elitist culture-brokers, but can originate from 'below' (personal interview, May 1996). Also see S. Marks, 'The Origins of Ethnic Violence in South Africa', in N. Etherington (ed), *Peace, Politics and Violence in the New South Africa*, London, 1992, p.128.

[83] S. Marks, 'African and Afrikaner History', *Journal of African History*, Vol 11, No 3, 1970.

[84] See S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, especially chapter 6. The construction of the 'Other' is a major theme in the historiography of identity formation, and the works concerned with this theme are two numerous to reproduce here. See E. Said, *Orientalism*, London, 1978 for a theretically powerful overview of this theme. Also see J. Shuttleworth, 'Sons of Shaka or Sons of Umslopogaas?', in N. Etherington (ed), *Peace, Politics and Violence* for an application of this concept to present-day Zulu societies.

placed much emphasis on African agency in determining the formation of more explicit Zulu ethnic identifications in the twentieth century context.

The importance of the role of the Zulu monarchy in shaping Zulu ethnic consciousness is also evident in most of Marks' studies. She stresses that the Bambatha Rebellion was very much a restorationist, rather than revolutionary, rebellion, representing the last attempt by the pre-capitalist Zulu order to resist full incorporation into the capitalist economy. The origins of the rebellion lay in the accelerated impoverishment of both Natal proper and Zululand. Late nineteenth century disasters like the 1897 Rinderpest epidemic and the 1903 drought led to poverty and insecurity. This combined with colonially imposed hut tax - aimed at enforcing migrant wage labour - and the appropriation of Zulu land by white settlers, to provoke the Rebellion. Hence Zulu resistance was 'reluctant', as the title of Marks' volume claims, and was not an example of the resurgence of a supposedly innate 'war-like' urge amongst the Zulu people, an idea all too prominent amongst the white settler society in Natal.[85] There was also much confusion amongst Zulu people as they attempted to come to terms with the vagaries of capitalism, and the plethora of petty laws imposed on those who sought work within the colonialist capitalist economy. James Stuart, a colonial official at the time of the rebellion and an exceptional Zulu linguist, collected much evidence concerning these issues from Zulu informants just prior to the Rebellion. One informant complained thus:

> *Natives should not be given money because they do not know its use. After we have worked, the money we earn is taken from us in every way. Our needs are increased. We then go out to work and wages are reduced.*[86]

The seeming pettiness of the law regarding black Africans in Natal also rankled. Ndhlovu ka Timuni, who had originally participated in the colonial economy, but who joined the 1906 rural rebellion, had his thoughts recorded and interpreted by Stuart three years earlier:

> *Ndhlovu says, 'We cannot find your gate; the gateway in our own times consisted in going and tendering our allegiance.' The chief laid stress on this. His meaning is that the native people, so far from being taken into our fold and becoming one with us, are standing outside and drifting further away as time goes on.*[87]

---

[85] S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, 1970, chapter 6.

[86] C. Webb and J. Wright (eds), 'The James Stuart Archive of Recorded Oral Evidence Relating to the History of the Zulu and Neighbouring Peoples', Vol 3, P.29. (Henceforth JSA). Webb and Wright have edited four volumes of Stuart's collection of interviews, published by the University of Natal Press, 1979-1987. This provides a major primary source for historians, and the work of Stuart provided the background for Marks' own work on the 1906 rebellion (see P.xvii, *Reluctant Rebellion*).

[87] JSA, Vol 4, P.212.

Marks demonstrates how Dinuzulu, then heir to the Zulu kingship previously held by Cetshwayo, became the symbol for resistance during the rebellion.[88] Dinuzulu had himself been exiled to St. Helena in the late nineteenth century when he was accused by the colonial authorities of fomenting unrest among the Zulu population, and encouraging rifts between the *Usuthu*, who supported the royal house, and other factions which opposed it.[89] When he returned after nine years of exile, the position of Zululand had altered considerably. It had been incorporated into Natal province, and Dinizulu himself became a government sponsored *induna*, responsible for just one region. But, as Marks points out, however well-meaning Dinuzulu might have been on his return, it was inevitable that he would become the focal point around which discontent congregated.[90] His name was invoked frequently in the Bambatha Rebellion, and subsequently led to his final exile on a farm in the Transvaal despite the fact that he played no active role in the uprising itself.

In an important article published in 1977, Marks furthers her analysis of the role of the Zulu monarchy in early twentieth century South Africa, its integral role in shaping a reformulated Zulu ethnic consciousness and examines the rise of the first *Inkatha* movement.[91] It is from this point that her work seems to become more explicitly involved with investigating the historical development of politicised Zulu ethnic identification.[92] However, before analysing these works it is worth referring to a recent criticism of the revisionist school of historiography to which Marks belongs vis-à-vis the study of ethnicity in South Africa, as this raises some major issues with respect to the way ethnicity is represented in South African historiography. Simon Bekker, a political scientist based in South Africa, has recently surveyed the major contributions to the study of ethnicity in South Africa from the disciplines of sociology, history and political science.[93] In this overview Bekker provides a critique of Vail's 1989 edited volume which explores the historical development of southern African ethnic identities.[94] Whilst acknowledging that the collection marks a considerable break from earlier marxian studies of

---

88 S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, parts 2 and 4.

89 These rifts in Zulu society were a direct result of the break-up of the nineteenth century Zulu kingdom after the Anglo-Zulu war and the consequent Zulu civil war. See J. Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p.p. 238-9.

90 S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, P.100.

91 S. Marks, 'Natal, The Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation', *JSAS*, Vol 4, No 1, 1977.

92 Marks has commented that her awareness of ethnic identities as a problematic area for academic investigation did not develop until the early 1980s. (Personal interview, May 1996). However, this article seems to lay the groundwork for many of her later articles, as will be demonstrated below. Following this article, Marks wrote several significant studies of Zulu ethnic identity, and ethnicity and nationalism in general. The main articles, and the ones which receive most examination in this chapter, are as follows: 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness', in L. Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, 1989; the introduction, co-written with Stanley Trapido, to *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London, 1987; 'The Origins of Ethnic Violence in South Africa'; 'Black and White Nationalisms in South Africa: A Comparative Perspective', in P. Kaarsholm and J. Hultin (eds), *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Roskilde, Denmark, 1994. These works borrow upon, and mutually reinforce, each other. Marks also, like Terence Ranger, makes much use of the recent explosion in studies concerned with ethnic and nationalist identities, and therefore can also be perceived as both reflecting and leading in the study of these identity formations. This observation will be expanded upon below.

93 S. Bekker, *Ethnicity in Focus*, Natal, 1993.

94 See chapter 2 for the significance of Vail's work in contributing to the academic study of ethnicity in southern Africa.

ethnicity, Bekker argues that it still portrays southern African political identities as fundamentally the result of political manipulation. He also criticises several of the contributions concerning South Africa, including that of Shula Marks, as addressing ethnicity at the level of the 'nation-state', with ethnic identifications portrayed as 'fracturing' the development of a broader nationalist consciousness.[95] Additionally, he argues that social history emerging in the 1980s, which analysed the historical development of ethnicity in South Africa, still placed too much emphasis on the role of capitalist development and ideological (political tribalist) forms of state manipulated ethnic identities. What these forms of identity meant to the people who adhered to them, in terms of every-day consciousness, went relatively unexplored.[96]

Marks' published studies regarding Zulu ethnic identities certainly seem to be primarily concerned with the political manipulation of ethnic consciousness. Her previously mentioned article analysing the development of the first *Inkatha* movement was also important at the time for stressing that twentieth century ideologies of segregation had their origins in nineteenth century Natal rather than the Boer republics, and that these nineteenth century ideologies were fundamentally reformulated in the twentieth century by English-speaking white segregationists.[97] However, although not explicitly or solely concerned with Zulu ethnic identification, the role of the Zulu monarchy and the first *Inkatha* movement in shaping politicised Zulu ethnic consciousness is comprehensively analysed. Marks argues that, by the 1920s, the colonial authorities were becoming increasingly concerned with the effects of 'detribalization' in Natal and Zululand. This was due to the fact that Zululand had begun to 'show really major strains as a result of the expansion of white capitalist farming, class formation within the African population, and overstocking and overgrazing - the latter ecological concomitants of the first two factors taken together with the consequences of the

---

[95] S. Bekker, *Ethnicity in Focus*, p.p.86-87.

[96] Ibid, P.84.

[97] The differences between the Boer republics' attitudes to chieftaincies and 'traditional' African societies, and that of the British administration in Natal, in the late nineteenth century was considerable. This was vividly portrayed in an article published in the Jan 29, 1892 edition of the *Natal Mercury*. The article is in effect a response by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the Secretary of State for Native Affairs in Natal between 1845 and 1875, to an earler article by President Reitz of the Orange Free State published in the November issue of the *Cape Magazine*. In this article Reitz had advocated the abolition of the institution of chieftainship and the 'tribal' system in order to fully incorporate the black African population as a subservient workforce serving white rule: 'The Kaffir, as an individual, may be a 'man'and (under due reservations) 'a brother', but as a member of a tribe, and the subject of a fat, arrogant chieftain, he can never be such. He is divided by an impassable barrier from the laws and customs of civilised humanity, and there is no room for him in his tribal condition in our European system of political economy'. Shepstone replied vigorously to this argument in the *Natal Mercury* article, strongly defending the upkeep of customary law, reserved lands for 'tribal' occupation, administration through acceptable traditional authorities, and measures to avoid the full proletarianisation of the African population which were the keystones of his reforms south of the Tugela river during his tenure as Secretary for Native Affairs, after the power of the Zulu monarchy had been broken (see D. Welsh, *The Roots of Segregation: Native Policy in Natal, 1845-1910*, London, 1971, for comprehensive analysis of the reforms implemented by Shepstone, which became a forerunner of 'indirect rule' policies elsewhere in British colonial Africa). The contrast between Reitz's advocation of full proletarianisation, and the policy of 'separate development' pursued by the later apartheid regime after 1948, are obvious. The above quote from Reitz is taken from T. Shepstone, 'The Native Question: Answer to President Reitz', Pamphlet DT 763 CAP, Bristol University (no date), which reproduces the original *Natal Mercury* edition, and the original article by Reitz.

eradication of East Coast Fever by about 1920'.[98] These factors facilitated the expansion of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union into rural areas, causing considerable alarm amongst colonial officials and white farmers.[99] Thus segregationists such as George Heaton Nicholls, M.P. for Zululand and President of both the South African Planter's Union and its affiliate the Zululand Planter's Union, began to advocate the restoration of the Zulu monarchy as a bulwark against rural unrest and discontent, and the preservation of 'traditional' African lifestyles in order to avert the perceived threat of communism.[100]

The culturally brokered, politically tribalist version of Zulu ethnic mobilisation in this period is strongly evident in this article. Through her analysis of the seemingly unlikely alliance between the small educated, professional, African elite in Natal and the Zulu royal family and its followers, Marks is able to demonstrate the convergence of widely different interest groups in terms of promoting the restoration of the Zulu royal line. The *kholwa* (African Christian) elite were products of mission school education dating from nineteenth century Natal. They initially rejected 'tribal' society and indigenous custom in order to embrace a 'European' lifestyle and eventual assimilation into colonial society. The divisions between *kholwa* and 'traditionalists' in many ways mirrored the 'red'/'school' split in the Eastern Cape.[101] The division was also largely geographical, with the *kholwa* mainly emerging from the nineteenth century Natal colony, whilst the Zulu kingdom north of the Tugela river remained largely impervious to missionary endeavours until the destruction of the Zulu kingdom in the late nineteenth century Zulu civil war.

John Dube, the first president of the South African Native National Congress (later to be renamed the African National Congress), embodied the spirit of this educated elite. In an early published tract, Dube graphically demonstrates the rejection of pre-colonial forms of culture and custom:

> *My people are thirsting for knowledge, are hungering after enlightenment, are ashamed of their nakedness and their empty minds. Our ignorance crushes us down. We cannot rise, even to be helpful to those that rule us, so long as this impotence lies heavily upon us. Relieve us of it. Help us to rise to those better things which we hoped for on your coming.*

---

[98] S. Marks, 'The Ideology of Segregation', P.183.

[99] For an insightful study of the penetration of the ICUinto rural areas, see H. Bradford, 'Lynch Law and Labourers: The ICU in Umvoti, 1927-1928', in W. Beinart, P. Delius, and S. Trapido (eds), *Putting a Plough to the Ground*, Braamfontein, South Africa. 1986. Bradford also comments on the utilisation of Zulu ethnicity by the ICU in order to pursue their own agenda.

[100] S. Marks, 'The Ideology of Segregation', p.180.

[101] See chapter 3.

That is what we pray; that is England's duty.[102]

His inaugural address as first president of the South African Native National Congress makes similar references to the need for 'civilisation'.[103] However, by 1938, Charles Mpanza, secretary of the Zulu Cultural Society, (dominated by *Kholwa*), was pushing hard for the restoration of the Zulu paramountcy and a return to custom and tradition.[104]

Marks argues that this considerable change in attitude towards the Zulu paramountcy was due largely to *kholwa* 'petty bourgeois' class interest. The growth in support for the ICU, and the consequent radicalisation of agricultural labourers, many of whom were employed by this early African elite, challenged their class status. This was already under threat from such legislation as the 1913 Lands Act, which in many ways was a response to the prosperity gained by many *kholwa* and other black African agricultural entrepreneurs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Hence the restoration of the paramountcy served various diverse interests, which nevertheless could buttress white domination. Ideologues such as Heaton Nicholls perceived the need to encourage this restoration in order to avoid the formation of a radicalised African proletariat; Dube, and others like him, did likewise in order to upkeep their own privileged status, which was under dual threat from the activities of the ICU and government legislation.[105]

As Marks comments, this unlikely alliance led to the formation of the first *Inkatha* movement in 1922-23. Founded by a group of Solomon's advisers, and members of the *kholwa* elite, including Dube, the movement aimed at raising money to purchase land for Zulu people and for paying off debts incurred by Solomon (which were considerable), as well as promoting Zulu 'tradition' and custom and the restoration of the Zulu paramountcy.[106] However, Marks does not just concentrate on political machinations, class self-interest and colonial manipulation of identity in her article. She also refers to two elements which are very important in the formation of an evolving early twentieth century Zulu ethnic consciousness. These include the appeal of the Zulu monarchy to the mass consciousness of rural Zulu people, and the close

---

[102] J. Dube, '*The Zulu's Appeal for Light and England's Duty*', London, 1908. P.5. Dube's pamphlet is littered throughout with these forms of subservient appeals, and these should be seen partly as a shrewd way of raising funds for his Ohlange industrial school, set up in the early part of the century. The pamphlet was specifically aimed at philanthropic bodies such as the Aborigines' Protection Society. However, it still seves to demonstrate *kholwa* thinking in terms of breaking from the perceived constraints of pre-colonial custom and culture, and of the wish to integrate with the 'European' way of life.

[103] Quoted in N. Cope, 'The Zulu Petty Bourgeoisie and Zulu Nationalism in the 1920s: Origins of Inkatha', in *JSAS*, Vol 16, No 3, 1990. P. 435.

[104] Quoted in S. Marks, 'The Ideology of Segregation', P.194.

[105] Before the various social, economic, political and ecological changes outlined above led to the growth of the ICU, the Zulu monarchy was perceived as a threat by the colonial power, posing the possibility of unifying the Zulu against white rule (S. Marks, 'The Ideology of Segregation', P.178). Furthermore, Dube and others like him, had earlier in the century been perceived by the Natal government as dangerous radicals (see S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, p.p.72-76). Marks' article is particularly useful in outlining the politically expedient reasons for the change in attitude towards the Zulu paramountcy in the 1920s.

[106] S. Marks, 'The Ideology of Segregation', P.189.

connections which many of the *kholwa* elite had with the old elite of chiefs. People are socialised into pre-existing identities and ethnic mobilisation has to be rooted in the real experiences of ordinary people. Although the uneven incursion of a capitalist economy and colonial domination had fractured Zulu society, many facets of pre-colonial Zulu morality and values remained.

Marks specifically refers to the importance of the role of the king in unifying pre-colonial Zulu society, protecting the people on both their natural and supernatural planes.[107] She also emphasises the close linkages between the new *kholwa* elite and the old elite of chiefs: 'nothing is more incorrect than to imagine that there was an inevitable and invariable rift between the new elite of teachers, preachers, clerks, lawyers and prosperous farmers and the old elite of chiefs..on many occasions the new elite were indeed the old in new guise'.[108] The reference to mass consciousness is also significant. For, as Marks comments, it was perhaps inevitable that people should turn to the royal family as well as the ICU, at a time of social and economic crisis. The Zulu royal family had been a central factor in defining pre-colonial Zulu ethnic identity, and the fact that full proletarianisation was being delayed through the migrant labour process meant that these loyalties remained the prime focus for many people. Nevertheless, Marks still seems to stress the culturally brokered version of Zulu ethnic identity to the detriment of further analysing ethnic identities at a more grass-roots level in this work. Political machinations figure far more prominently than issues of social, moral and ideological change. Gender identities, which are inextricably intertwined with ethnic and national identities, are also largely ignored. Some of these issues were directly addressed in Marks' later works.

In 1983, Marks attended the conference at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, which resulted in Leroy Vail's 1989 edited work *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa.* Marks' contribution to this publication involved a further study of the construction of pre-1948 Zulu ethnicity, expanding her previous work by extending her study into the 1930s.[109] The influence of Tom Nairn's study of British nationalism is very apparent in this work. Marks herself states that his work has been one of the most influential in the development of her own thinking with

---

[107] Ibid, P.186. The fact that Marks recognises the contribution of ordinary people in constructing Zulu politicised ethnicity during this period contrasts with the concept of 'invention of tradition' originating from Terence Ranger a few years later. Marks places African agency nearer to the centre of identity construction (although Ranger was referring to a specific period in his analysis, when 'traditions' were being 'invented' at a particularly rapid rate. Ranger's work has also suffered from misinterpretation, many academics utilising his conceptualisations out of chronological context - see chapter 4).

[108] Ibid, P.191. Early twentieth century African nationalist culture brokers often tended to display varying levels of consciousness with regard to nationalist and more parochial ethnicised identities. Many situated their conceptualisation of African nationalism in this period firmly within the idiom of the cultures and customs of the communities in which they were socialised. See chapter 9 for a more in-depth analysis of this issue. Marks specifically refers to the origins of several Zulu culture-brokers in this period, some of whom were early African nationalists, who often originated from chiefly lineages and were closely involved in the affairs of the Zulu and Swazi royal families. The South African Native National Congress was also heavily reliant on funding from the major royal families (see S. Marks, 'The Ideology of Segregation', p.p.189-90).

[109] S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness', in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism.*

regard to ethnicity and nationalism.[110] His depiction of nationalism as the 'Modern Janus' is particularly evident in this example of Marks' work, as is his argument that 'Third World' nationalist elites had to make use of the cultural building blocks already existing:

> *In the Third World, as 'newly awakened elites' have 'discovered that tranquil incorporation into the cosmopolitan technocracy was possible for only a few of them at a time', they were thrown on their own resources and sought to mobilize their societies for advance...and the point of the dilemma was that there was nothing - none of the economic and political institutions of modernity now so needed. All that there was was the people and peculiarities of the region: its inherited ethnos, speech, folklore, skin-colour and so on...The new middle-class intelligentsia of nationalism had to invite the masses into history; and the invitation card had to be written in a language they understood.*[111]

The article itself concentrates on the 'selective traditionalism' of the Zulu Cultural society, which pursued many of the objectives originating from the first *Inkatha* movement before its demise in the early 1930s.[112] Social change and ideological issues are also given far more prominence than previously. By now, Marks had been influenced by the work of Benedict Anderson as well as Tom Nairn, and this seems to have sharpened her approach in analysing the construction of 'imagined communities'.[113] She was also focussing on gender issues. Bekker's criticism that Marks addresses Zulu ethnic identity at the level of the nation-state in this article does contain some elements of truth. At the end of the article, Marks comments as follows:

> *In Natal, to a very considerable extent - although there were, of course, exceptions and a certain radicalization there too - the construction of an ethnic 'answer' to the problems of urbanization and modernity - whether by the Zulu Society or Inkatha - hampered the growth of the kind of radical vision which could have combatted the chauvinism encouraged by*

---

[110] Personal Interview, May 1996. The work to which Marks refers is T. Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain*, London, 1977.

[111] S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity', p.221.

[112] This demise was due largely to *Inkatha's* close identification with Solomon, who was becoming increasingly politically unreliable by the start of the 1930s, and financial mismanagement. See N. Cope, *To Bind the Nation: Solomon kaDinuzulu and Zulu Nationalism, 1913-1933*, Pietermaritzburg, 1993, chapter 10.

[113] Personal interview, May 1996. Marks' article on the rise of the first *Inkatha* movement (see above) in some ways presages these works, in that it does analyse the constructed and contested nature of culturally brokered Zulu ethnicity. However, Nairn and Anderson seem to have been influential in allowing Marks to frame a more complex analysis of this construction, with social issues receiving far more prominence than before.

the state and the anti-Indian polemic of Natal whites in 1949
- or, indeed, contemporary 'tribal' violence.[114]

However, he then accuses Marks, together with various other contributors to Vail's work, of glossing over the fact that ethnicity can coexist easily within modernity, and instead arguing that these 'parochial' loyalties to 'clan', 'chief' and 'tribe' will wither away as a wider consciousness develops.[115] This is a mis-reading of Marks' work, and can be illustrated through quoting another section of Nairn's theory regarding nationalism:

(I)t has to function through highly rhetorical forms, through a sentimental culture sufficiently accessible to the lower strata now being called into battle. This is why a romantic culture quite remote from Enlightenment rationalism always went hand in hand with the spread of nationalism.[116]

This differentiation refers to the two main forms of nationalism which have rooted themselves in nineteenth and twentieth century global history; ethnic and civic nationalism. Nationalism itself is an extremely malleable form of identity (as is ethnicity), and can be allied with numerous different ideologies according to the historical circumstances of the time.[117] Civic nationalism, rooted - as Nairn mentions - in Enlightenment rationality, 'envisages the nation as a community of equal, rights - bearing citizens, united in patriotic attachment to a shared set of political practices and values...Ethnic nationalism claims...that an individual's deepest attachments are inherited, not chosen. It is the national community which defines the individual, not the individuals who define the national community'.[118] Marks' contribution to Vail's book implicitly develops this theoretical approach, moving beyond rigid classifications of identity and demonstrating how they can overlap and intertwine - for both ethnic and civic nationalism grow from the same roots.[119]

Marks outlines several concerns of the *kholwa* intelligentsia who dominated the Zulu Cultural Society at the time. These included the practice of *lobola*, land reform, the 'proper' conduct of women and the practice of *hlonipha* and changing modes of dance which often interlinked with violence. All these issues were set within the context of concern over the effects of urbanization and proletarianization, and the tensions arising between the need to select what was considered valuable in African culture, and the need for this elite intelligentsia to maintain

---

[114] S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity', P.234.
[115] S. Bekker, *Ethnicity in Focus*, P.88.
[116] Quoted in S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity', p.221.
[117] This malleability of nationalism is discussed in more depth in chapters 3 and 9.
[118] M. Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys Into the New Nationalism*, London, 1993. P.P.3-5.
[119] Again, see chapters 3 and 9 for further analysis.

a self-definition of 'respectability'.[120] Of course, these concerns were not exclusive to Zulu society at this time. Many other African communities contained small groups of elite culture brokers who were equally concerned with the effects of urbanisation and proletarianization.[121] What is important to recognise here is that Marks was not, as Bekker implies, suggesting that ethnic identities would eventually wither away under the impact of modernity. Instead, she is stressing the multiplicity of paths towards modernity that existed within the South African, and specifically Zulu, context at this historical juncture. It is within this context that the moral ethnicity/political tribalism model can be usefully applied.[122]

In the context of Zulu ethnicity, it seems that the meaning of 'Zulu-ness' was being constantly debated within the small elite intelligentsia of the time. Marks provides several examples of this 'selective traditionalism'. She refers for example to Dube's denouncing of the *lobola* system as detrimental to the 'progress' of the people.[123] However, although this could be perceived as an attempt to allow more women independence, the Zulu Royal Charter itself defended the declining practice of *hlonipha*, which certainly entailed women maintaining a subservient role to men.[124] Marks demonstrates that all these debates were rooted in a concern with the effects of urbanization, modernity, and gradual proletarianization upon the Zulu people. The effects of the migrant labour process deprived villages of young men for considerable lengths of time and consequently put young women under increasing pressure to participate in sexual intercourse. This combined with the decline of external forms of intercourse - frowned upon by the church - to increase the number of unwanted adolescent pregnancies.[125]

Another contested area concerned dance. Marks refers to a heated debate between members of the Zulu Cultural Society, and other Zulu members of the *kholwa* dominated intelligentsia, concerning the Natal Education Department's introduction of 'Bantu Dancing' into the teacher training syllabus in 1948. Some members argued that this should be encouraged as a symbol of a vibrant Zulu culture, others objected on the grounds that it would portray Zulu people as 'primitive', encouraging white racist stereotypes. However, the Zulu

---

[120] S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity', p.p.221-234.

[121] See chapters 3 and 9.

[122] My interpretation of moral ethnicity and political tribalism is outlined in chapter 3.

[123] S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity', p.222. The *lobola*, or 'bridewealth', system was central to the moral economies of many pre-colonial southern African societies. See A. Kuper, *Wives for Cattle: Bridewealth and Marriage in Southern Africa*, London, 1982, and J. Guy, 'Analysing Pre-Capitalist Societies in Southern Africa', *JSAS*, Vol 14, No 1, 1987. Dube was a key member of the Zulu Cultural Society in the 1930s.

[124] S. Marks, ibid, p.p.229-230. The whole issue of *hlonipha* etiquette is, however, one of ambiguity, for women could maintain a circumscribed independence within its prescribed parameters. See chapter 7. Also A. Liebenberg, 'Authority, Avoidances and Marriage: An Analysis of the Position of Gcaleka Women in Qwaninga, Willowvale District, Transkei', M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, South Africa, 1994.

[125] S. Marks, ibid, p.228. The consequent male fear of loss of control over women demonstrates how women often marked the boundaries of ethnicised identities. As Marks points out, many men feared that 'their' women would fall prey to men of other 'races' in an urban situation.

Cultural Society charter also inveighed against another form of dancing which had started to permeate Zulu culture through urbanisation and contact with westernised forms of culture:

> *With regard to the abandonment of original Zulu dancing, it is to be observed that our youth do not now shrink from engaging in types of dancing that they copy from other races. It is said that these our people take whole nights capering man and woman glued together in pairs, cheek to cheek, jumping and jiggling in a manner that is most foreign and objectionable to us Zulus.*[126]

Marks also refers to how pre-colonial dance forms could contribute to the ways in which a 'pre-colonial past provided military metaphors for mobilisation'.[127] This issue will be examined later. What is made apparent through these examples is the fact that, although many of the Zulu Cultural Society were also ardent African Nationalists, they could only articulate this nascent nationalism to the majority of the people through the cultural building blocks which already existed. These building blocks provided the raw material for the growth of either ethnic or civic nationalism. Marks also points out that many of these early culture brokers were themselves not that far removed from the societies to whom they projected their message.[128] This is an important observation in itself. For although this new cultural elite represented in many respects a newly forming middle class, it still had its foundations firmly rooted in its own particular culture. Marks thus demonstrates that ethnic nationalism can evolve alongside civic nationalism, and this contradicts the criticism of Bekker. Furthermore, it demonstrates that the paths to modernity for Zulu people, and Africans in general for that matter, were diverse and varied. However, Marks can be criticised for concentrating too much on culturally brokered forms of ethnic identification in this article, and it is perhaps here that Bekker's criticism does have some credibility. For Marks does seem to neglect partially an analysis of what these culturally brokered forms of identity actually meant to the people they were projected at, and how they could reformulate them in order to form their own identities in an era of rapid socio-economic change.

5.2 Shula Marks and the Multiple Levels of Ethnic Identity: Some Theoretical Reflections

Ethnic identification works at various levels, intertwined with other identities such as class and gender, and also in terms of moral ethnicity and political tribalism. There does seem to be a

---

[126] Quoted in S. Marks, ibid, p.229.
[127] Ibid, p.233.
[128] Ibid, p.224, and footnote no47, p.237.

pattern within southern African societies whereby people have gained an ethnicised consciousness, largely - although not necessarily - through contact with colonising powers, which has provoked an internal debate with regard to what lived criteria best represents the ethnicised group. In other words, moral ethnicity. These identities have subsequently been appropriated by both the state and elite ethnic culture brokers within the group itself in order to pursue particular political agendas - in other words, political tribalism.[129] Marks certainly recognises that various levels of ethnic identification exist, including what I have referred to in this thesis as 'passive', day-to-day, non-politicised identities, which people utilise in order to make sense of their lives.[130] However, she has argued that it is difficult to conceive of an ethnic identity without it first being categorised as such, either from outside the group itself, or by certain individuals from within.[131] Marks also questions Lonsdale's concept of moral ethnicity and political tribalism as potentially divisive and dangerous, arguing that moral ethnicity promotes the concept of an innate 'tribal' morality:

> *It seems to me that there is an enormous danger in accepting ethnicity as a given...Once you maintain that it is the ethnic group which is the bearer of moral purpose, you entrench those boundaries in much too narrow a way...I think what we have to do is persuade people of the openness of boundaries, and the possibility of people moving to and fro.*[132]

Hence there is a clear political objective in Marks' works. She seems to be arguing for an historiography which demonstrates that tight, constructed ethnic boundaries can be broken down. At a conference held at Roskilde University in Denmark in 1993, which was specifically concerned with theoretical approaches in studying ethnicity and nationalism, and which was attended by both Lonsdale and Marks, she argued that Lonsdale's concept was not applicable in the South African context.[133]

This dismissal of the concept of moral ethnicity seems to emanate from Marks' own advocation of demonstrating the fluidity of ethnic boundaries. Her earlier works, especially the

---

[129] See chapter 3.

[130] S. Marks, personal interview, May 1996.

[131] Ibid. In this interview Marks argues that everyone lives their culture, handed down from generation to generation. However, peoples perceive this as a 'natural' way of life, and that others who do not adhere to their culture, customs and lifestyles are 'strange'. She then argues that this does not mean that people perceive of themselves as an ethnic group without this identity being articulated in some form.

[132] S. Marks, personal interview, May 1996. Marks' response was to a question regarding her opinion of Lonsdale's concept of moral ethnicity.

[133] T. Ranger, personal interview, Dec 1995. The conference, entitled 'Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism', was hosted by the university's department of International Development Studies. Ranger, who also attended the conference, recalls Marks commenting that the concept of moral ethnicity was not acceptable in the South African context, as it (according to her) implied that ethnicity was an acceptable, moral identity in itself. (Personal interview, December 1995).

two examples outlined above, stress the ways that politicised ethnicity (political tribalism) fractures class consciousness. She argues in Vail's edited collection: 'that the responses to poverty and privilege tend to take a 'racial' or 'tribal' form has as much to do with the deliberate manipulation of ethnic rather than other forms of identity by the state and the particular road that the African intelligentsia and political leadership have travelled in Natal'.[134] Her later works place primary emphasis on the divisive effects of this form of ethnicity in terms of subverting a broader nationalist consciousness.[135] Therefore, although she argues strongly for the importance of African agency in the shaping of South African history, most of her works regarding the study of ethnicity are more concerned with the ideas and actions of elite leaders than on their relationships with their followers. She also fails to provide a comprehensive analysis of what these identities meant to the ordinary Africans involved. It is in this context that Bekker's critique carries some weight.[136] Marks does refer to 'mass' consciousness in her 1977 article, especially with reference to the importance of the Zulu paramountcy as an early focus for opposition to colonial rule.[137] However, this is not developed, and she concentrates primarily on the machinations of ethnic culture brokers. This seems to be a political choice. For by placing emphasis on the culturally brokered, politically tribalist form of Zulu identity, twentieth century Zulu ethnicity is portrayed as primarily a political, constructed, creation (and by implication, can therefore be deconstructed in order to forge a broader, pan-African consciousness).[138] It seems that Marks' work is pulled in two different directions over this issue. She always stresses the importance of African agency in her work, and yet places primary emphasis on the role of the state and ethnic culture brokers in terms of the construction of ethnicised identities, perhaps in order to avoid implying a dubious essentialism to Zulu ethnicity. However, the concept of moral ethnicity was never meant to suggest that ethnicity is moral in itself. Rather, it suggests that morality can sometimes be debated within an ethnicised context.

5.3 Age-Regiments, Migrant Labour, and the Erosion of Rural Identities

The widespread formation of age-regiments in the time of Shaka resulted in a fundamental reformulation of pre-colonial Zulu society. Anthropologists studying Zulu communities between the 1930s and 1960s stressed their importance in producing the perceived character of the Zulu peoples. For example, Krige argues that the whole nineteenth century Zulu 'nation'

---

134 S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity', p.233.

135 See especially her work 'Black and White Nationalisms in South Africa: A Comparative Perspective', in *Inventions and Boundaries*, her co-written introduction to *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism*, and *the Ambiguities of Dependence.*

136 This should not be read as a ringing endorsement of all Bekker's criticisms. His dismissal of capitalism and colonialism as fundamental shaping forces in the creation of twentieth century ethnic identifications implies allowing the latter a dubious essentialism, which is patently not the case.

137 'The Ideology of Segregation', p.p.187-8.

138 Ranger certainly takes the view that Marks perceives ethnicity primarily in politicised terms - personal interview, Dec 1995.

was organised into what could be perceived as one great military camp, which helped mould the 'character' of the Zulu people.[139] Reader, in his study of a particular Zulu society in the 1950s, comments that 'religio-magical sanctions and the strengthening of the regiments reinforce political solidarity and fortify the people's belief in their capacity for potential independence'.[140]

Age-regiments, and their disintegration in the aftermath of the Anglo-Zulu war, and the subsequent Civil war, are important in gaining a more comprehensive understanding of why Zulu ethnic identities developed as they did in the twentieth century. As mentioned above, the promotion of the age-regiment system under Shaka contributed to the construction of the nineteenth century Zulu state, and therefore the growth of a specifically Zulu ethnic identity. The whole issue of regiments has provoked considerable controversy amongst academics concerning the psychological and sociological effects they had upon the consciousness of the peoples involved. When young men were *buthwa'd* (enrolled) into *amabutho* (age-sets or regiments), they had to reside at the military kraal of the king, providing service to him, and were not allowed to don the head-ring and thus be eligible for marriage until the king gave his consent. Women were also enrolled into age-sets, but were allowed to remain at their homesteads until marriage. Some histories concerning the Zulu peoples have argued that this restriction on marriage led to an accumulation of repressed sexual energy which was somehow transmuted into military vigour. A recent example of this approach is Stephen Taylor's 'popular' history of the Zulu people.[141]

Revisionist historians such as Jeff Guy have dismissed this somewhat 'primordialist' interpretation, instead arguing that the age-regiment system represented a mechanism of control over the production and reproduction of labour power in pre-capitalist society, allowing the king control over exploitation of the environment.[142] However, this revisionist approach does not completely explain the impact which the age-regiment system had upon the consciousness of the people involved. As a process of socialisation into particular identities it seems to have been very important, affecting Zulu societies well into the twentieth century, despite - or perhaps because of - the disintegration of the late nineteenth century Zulu state. Furthermore, these processes cannot be solely reduced to concepts of ideological reproduction of class divisions.

---

139 E. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus*, Pietermaritzburg, 1965 (originally published 1936), p. 261.

140 D. Reader, *Zulu Tribe in Transition: The Makhanya of Southern Natal*, Manchester, 1966, p. 293.

141 S. Taylor, *Shaka's Children: A History of the Zulu People*, London, 1995, p.p.71-2.

142 See J. Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, chap one, and 'Analysing Pre-Capitalist Societies in Southern Africa', *JSAS*, Vol 14, No 1, 1987. For an in-depth discussion of the origins and development of the age-regiment system within the nineteenth century Zulu kingdom see C. Hamilton, 'Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power in the Early Zulu Kingdom'.

Socialisation processes are very significant in the shaping of ethnic identities. As mentioned above, Marks herself examined several changing aspects of Zulu socialisation processes and customs in her contribution to Vail's edited volume. She refers in particular to the connection between certain dance forms and recurrent outbreaks of 'faction fights', which caused concern among the elite intelligentsia of the time. Drawing on Clegg, Marks argues that the deliberate manipulation of ethnic boundaries and chiefly authority by Natal administrators since the mid-nineteenth century had meant that from the end of that century onwards, tensions over land shortage in particular had manifested themselves in 'faction fights' between different 'tribes' and within them between supporters of rival chiefly contenders.[143] The absence of the institution of the monarch and national age-regiments as stabilising factors contributed to these conflicts.[144] Concerns over the proposed revival of 'traditional' forms of Zulu dance, as advocated by the Natal Department of Education for introduction into the teaching syllabus in 1948, centred around these themes.[145] To dance, or *giya*, was an essential part of the rituals utilised in preparing for war in the nineteenth century Zulu state. Warriors would have their praises sung, and then be called upon to dance:

> *Praises would cause a person to become roused. He would remember his praises when the battle was on, feeling he would be worthless if he did not fight fiercely. For it was one's praises that displayed one's popularity...When a man was not praised, when he did not 'giya', when he did not work himself into a frenzy, as one who was no longer a fierce fighter, his meat would be soaked in water.*[146]

Krige, in her classic study of the Zulu peoples during the 1930s, made several observations regarding the reformulation of age-regiments which arose due to the process of migrant labour and the consequent loss of chiefly authority. Young men participating in migrant labour were not always present at times of regiment formation, and this led to a loss of hierarchical respect for elders.[147] She argues that the *buthwa* is essential in perpetuating any corporate 'tribal' life, as without it men cannot become full members of the 'tribe' as they cannot take their 'proper' place in the hierarchy of age which, in Zulu rural life at that time (and even now), was so important. However, she also observed that, although the absence of so many young men 'in

---

[143] S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity', p.232. The work upon which Marks draws in this instance is J. Clegg, 'Ukubuyisa Isidumbu - "Bringing Back the Body": An Examination Into the Ideology of Vengeance in the Msinga and Mpofana Rural Locations, 1882-1944', in P. Bonner (ed), *Working Papers in Southern African Studies, Vol 2*, Braamfontein, 1981.

[144] J. Clegg, 'Ukubuyisa Isidumbu', p.165.

[145] S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity', p.232.

[146] Evidence of Mtshapi ka Noradu, JSA, Vol 4, p.p.73-7.

[147] E. Krige, *Social System*, p.38.

the service of the European, affects the holding of these ceremonies,...this is not as great a drawback as may at first appear, for those absent nowadays automatically belong to the group of their age-mates.'[148] Krige also found that young men who still attended the *buthwa* in the 1930s were becoming more difficult to control, with increased rivalries breaking out between different groups, often ending in violence.[149]

Whilst there are problems with the methodology of Krige's work, [150] her observations do hint at changes resulting from the migrant labour process, and how young men were perhaps forging a new ethnicity within a more urban milieu. The breakdown in hierarchy previously so important in Zulu social life (and for South African peoples in general) does seem to be primarily related to urban influences and partial proletarianisation. Furthermore, the generational divisions to which Krige refers may well have manifested themselves in the growth of *amalaita* gangs in the first four decades of the twentieth century.

Amalaita gangs were primarily an urban phenomenon, with only an uneven and varied transposition of their form of identity back into the countryside.[151] It seems they represented a reformulation of rural Zulu identity within a specific urban milieu. Located on the boundaries of youthful rebellion and professional criminal activity, these migrant youth groups drew upon symbolic elements of Zulu militarism and self-discipline, reminiscent of the values promoted in previous rural age-regiment systems. As Krige noted, many young migrant labourers migrated to town with members of their own age-set, and this facilitated the creation of a reformulated identity. La Hausse's periodisation of the growth and demise of *amalaita* gangs bears much similarity with the more general preliminary periodisation of youth gangs contained in Beinart's study of political violence in South Africa.[152] These gangs appear sometimes to have constructed their own discipline and code of conduct, in place of the system of discipline inherent in *amabutho* age-regiments. It also seems that these gangs sometimes arose within the context of an ethnicised division of labour.[153]

---

[148] Ibid, p.107.

[149] Ibid, p.110.

[150] Like many anthropological works between the 1930s and 1960s (although there are notable exceptions, such as the work of the Mayers - see chapters two and three), Krige writes in the ethnographic present. She draws on a wide range of historical sources spanning a considerable length of time, and tends towards portraying a picture of Zulu life as it might have been like if undisturbed by conquest and colonial rule. This means that she tends not to analyse processes of change at any depth, instead producing a type of 'then and now' approach.

[151] P. La Hausse, '"The Cows of Nongoloza": Youth, Crime and Amalaita Gangs in Durban, 1900-1936', *JSAS*, Vol 16, No 1, 1990.

[152] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence in Southern African Historiography', *JSAS*, Vol 18, No 3, 1992. This periodisation is outlined and systematically analysed in chapter 8, which also contains a more comprehensie analysis of the relationship between male socialisation, violence, migrant labour and reformulated ethnic identity.

[153] P. La Hausse, 'The Cows of Nongoloza', p.p.86-87. La Hausse comments that *amalaita* gangs in the early twentieth century were composed largely of young domestic servants. These young people had originally migrated with their own age-set members due to the disintegration of rural society for the reasons mentioned above. La Hausse argues that rural Zulu youth tended towards this form of employment both because white employers could pay lower wages to younger males, and also because older, rurally based African males considered domestic work the province of women and young men.

Marks herself refers to this correspondence between specific forms of employment and ethnic identity.[154] However, she does not expand on this form of ethnicity, which I would argue is part of the moral ethnic debate. Instead, much of her work concentrates on the construction of Zulu political tribalism. This would seem an important omission. Migrant youth associations often based their sense of identity around a reformulated form of ethnicity. In the context of the *amalaita*, stick-fighting, which was often a major component of the socialisation of youth in rural areas, was transferred to the urban context, as well as *ngoma* dancing, utilisation of rural Zulu regimental names and reformulated forms of rural Zulu dress.[155] Hence, they can be perceived as representing a re-interpretation of 'Zuluness' within an urban context. Young men, having gained an increased amount of independence due to the incursions of the capitalist economy and migrant labour system, were openly debating what it meant to be 'Zulu', as well as challenging the authority of rural chiefs. The migrant labour system had allowed a crucial space for the re-working of older forms of identification, which may not have existed if the process of proletarianisation had been more complete.[156] As this ethnicised identity became more explicit, *amalaita* gangs in Durban could be mobilised for more radical, political purposes. For example, many *amalaita* were incorporated into ICU organisation during the 1929-30 beerhall riots.[157] Although the form of identity which the *amalaita* represented was not easily mobilised, the fact that many did support the union illustrates that they were available for mobilisation into wider forms of consciousness, as well as illustrating the flexibility of the ICU. However, the symbols of a rural Zulu identity which these gangs drew upon could also be utilised in terms of gaining support for various forms of ethnic nationalism, as will be demonstrated later. *Amalaita* gangs themselves eventually died away by the 1940s, giving way to the fully urbanised *tsotsi* gangs.[158]

The issue of circumcision also seems to play an as yet ill-explored factor in the process of ethnicised Zulu identities. Unlike many traditional youth organisations, young men enrolled into the *amabutho* age-regiments during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were not circumcised. Additionally, *amabutho* initiates underwent 'no learning of secret formulae, nor the strict seclusion and mystery that characterise the circumcision lodge'.[159] When the age-regiment system was largely broken up at the end of the nineteenth century, this meant that

---

[154] S. Marks, 'The Origins of Ethnic Violence', p.128.

[155] P. La Hausse, 'The Cows of Nongoloza', p.87, 88, 95,100,101.

[156] However, *amalaita* gangs were not exclusive to Zulu youths. In Johannesburg and Pretoria, Pedi youths formed similar associations. See W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa*, Oxford, 1994, p.105.

[157] P. La Hausse, 'The Cows of Nongoloza', p.p.105-107.

[158] See chapter 8.

[159] E. Krige, *Social System*, p. 117. Circumcision was a central element in socialising young men into responsible 'manhood' - see chapter five. The admonition ceremonies similarly stressed the need to be responsible as the young men involved passed out of the circumcision lodge. For descriptions of these lodges in different societies, see for example P. Mayer, *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, Oxford, 1971, and W.D. Hammond-Tooke, *Boundaries and Belief: The Structure of a Sotho World View*, Witwatersrand, 1981.

there was little left in terms of socialisation into full 'manhood',[160] unlike other South African communities. Although only speculation, this may have facilitated Buthelezi's mobilisation of young males in support of his Inkatha movement, for the lack of these socialisation processes in the rural areas could have ensured that young men tended to perceive of their identities through other forms of surviving, or reformulated, customs if these were promoted in a culturally brokered fashion. But, as demonstrated, the myth of the Zulu 'warrior tradition' could be manipulated at times of socio-economic and political crisis.

5.4 Culture Brokers and 'Passive' Ethnicity: Shula Marks' Analysis of Zulu Ethnic Identity 1948-Present

The ascendancy of the Nationalist party in 1948 also seemed initially to mark the decline of Zulu ethnic identifications. Support for the Zulu monarchy dwindled when, as Marks comments, the apartheid state 'handed the king a poisoned chalice by recognising him'.[161] The Zulu Cultural Society faded away due to the fact that it backed the wrong incumbent to the chieftaincy. African nationalism was also becoming a more attractive alternate form of identity. However, this was to become more complicated with the full implementation of apartheid legislation, especially the establishment of Kwazulu as a 'Bantu Homeland' in 1972. This allowed the crucial space for political culture brokers such as Mangosuthu Buthelezi to manipulate what Marks has termed the 'the inchoate but still pulsating Zulu cultural nationalism'.[162] The Inkatha Zulu National Cultural Movement was resurrected in 1975, paradoxically with the covert support of the ANC., and through it Buthelezi was initially able to portray himself as the inheritor of the now banned ANC's resistance to apartheid. However, in order to survive as a Bantustan leader, he had to oppose the armed struggle and the sanctions campaign. This eventually led to clashes between supporters of Inkatha, and ANC oriented organisations such as the United Democratic Front and the Trade Union movement. Violence thus escalated throughout the 1980s, and into the run-up to the first democratic national elections in South Africa during the early 1990s.[163]

---

[160] Although the regimental system did continue in some areas for the first few decades of the twentieth century this was largely a ceremonial event, although some chiefs were accused of deliberately strengthening their armies - See E. Krige, *Social System, passim.*

[161] S. Marks, 'The Origins of Ethnic Violence', p.138.

[162] Ibid, p.138.

[163] This is a very basic summary of these important issues. For a useful introductory overview, see W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa*, especially chapters 8, 9 and 10.

Marks' later works comprehensively analyse this reification of Zulu ethnic identity. In her 1992 study of the origins of ethnic violence in South Africa she stresses several elements which have contributed to the success of Buthelezi, Inkatha and Zulu ethnic nationalism. For example she mentions that Buthelezi had everything to play for if he could get Zulu people to identify primarily as Zulu in a decentralised federal state. She states that rapid impoverishment and urbanisation provided the grounds for him to play on ethnic exclusivism.[164] She then argues that this political project was facilitated by the construction of a 'proud military history' of the Zulu, centred around opposition to colonial rule. Finally, the existence of a nineteenth century centralised kingdom, and the institution of the Zulu monarchy provided the cultural and social building blocks by which Buthelezi was able to build his own tribalist version of Zulu ethnic nationalism. He was thus able to do this with far more support from the people at whom his ethnicised message was aimed than political culture brokers in other 'homelands', who often had to build their constructed, 'ethnicised' edifices without the solid foundations which existed amongst the Zulu speaking people.[165]

This particular approach is very much a development of the works analysed above. The insights first gleaned from the earlier articles are synthesised and expanded in order to take into account the development of Zulu ethnicised identities through the era of apartheid and its final dismantling.[166] The importance of the monarchy is still central to Marks' analysis with regard to mobilising Zulu people, as is the articulation between patriarchy and the various forms of Zulu ethnicised identity discussed. Generational divisions, centred around the breakdown of rural concepts of respect, are also re-emphasised. Marks utilises these insights in order to demonstrate why the increase in urbanization, together with a process of deindustrialisation and consequent mass unemployment, which accelerated towards the end of the apartheid era, manifested themselves in an ethnicised manner in Natal and the Rand.[167]

She also attempts to analyse the consciousness of Zulu people other than ethnic culture brokers in a more systematic fashion, albeit in terms of why people are available for ethnicised violence:

> *the very terms ANC/UDF/'comrades'/amaqabane on the one hand, and Inkatha and amatheleweni on the other, encapsulate 'maps of meaning', clusters of attributes in the minds both of those who identify*

---

[164] S. Marks, 'The Origins of Ethnic Violence', p.131-2.

[165] Ibid, p.p.132-136.

[166] Marks has written two other recent major articles which are substantially concerned with ethnicised identities in post-1948 South Africa: the co-edited introduction to *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism*, and 'Black and White Nationalisms in South Africa: A Comparative Perspective'. However, as these articles make very similar theoretical points with regard to Zulu ethnic identities, they do not receive a comprehensive analysis in this chapter.

[167] S. Marks, 'The Origins of Ethnic Violence', p.127.

> *themselves in this way and in those of their opponents. The labels go far beyond what we usually consider political allegiance, to encompass urban and rural values, styles of language and dress. Membership means being a part of the 'culture' or sub-culture of the groups involved, rather than merely signifying adherence to a political programme.*[168]

In other words, membership of these groupings signifies a cultural identity, not simply a political statement. Marks argues that this explains why many members are willing to kill and die for both movements without being able to specify the national policies and leaders whom they allegedly support.

Marks here seems to be demonstrating the difference between structure and agency, which is, as has already been mentioned, a central tenet of her approach to South African history in general. However, she still seems to portray ethnic identities as culturally brokered constructions, with non-politicised identifications argued to be cultural building blocks, around which people might form identities, but which in themselves are not ethnic. In order for an identity to become ethnicised, it has usually to be culturally brokered, and in a politically tribalist fashion. The only other form of ethnic identification which she accepts is in terms of competition for jobs in a specifically urban context, and even though Marks accepts this form of ethnic identity, she does not analyse it in any great depth. However, recent sociological studies of Zulu ethnic identities have suggested that a more 'passive', non-politicised form of Zulu ethnicity exists, and anthropological works carried out in the 1960s posited the assumption that ethnicised identities could exist without being culturally brokered. Kuper's study of Zulu society in 1960s Durban is a case in point.[169]

A recent sociological survey, concerned with the intertwining of ethnic, gender and class identities in a specifically urban milieu, has posited that a form of 'passive' (my term) Zulu ethnic identity does exist, although vague and ill-defined. The authors of the study also found that, although this 'passive' form of ethnic identification could be manipulated by ethnic entrepreneurs such as Buthelezi, it was not in itself politicised. Nor was it manipulated by the historical actors themselves in order to obtain scarce resources, such as jobs, in a fast-changing, poverty stricken, socio-economic climate.[170] Finally, 'in contrast to Buthelezi's

---

[168] Ibid.

[169] L. Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie*, especially chapter eight. Kuper specifically analyses 'tribal' stereotyping amongst students, particularly between Sotho and Zulu. These stereotypes seem to have little to do with culturally brokered manipulations of identity. See chapter 8 of this thesis for a more comprehensive coverage of Kuper's work.

[170] See C. Campbell, G. Mare, C. Walker, with D. Mbona and N. Marawa, 'Part Three. Just About Being: Social Identities and Working People', in A. Sitas (Project Coordinator), *Managing Change in Kwazulu-Natal's Industries: A Research Report to the CSD/HSRC*, Centre for Industrial and Labour Studies, University of Natal, Durban, 1995. The authors conceptualise ethnicity in terms of two distinct manifestations of ethnicity, which can intertwine but are distinct. These are defined as follows: '1) the lived experience of ordinary people as perceived members of an ethnic group (which we are describing here as ethnic identity), and 2) the fashioning and mobilisation of this experience by political brokers for political ends', (P.288). Also

ethno-nationalism, which focuses on the political in regional and national terms, our informants located their identification of themselves as 'Zulu' primarily in the domestic and the local: in terms of family, home, clan and community'.[171] Elements which suggested the existence of a 'passive', day-to-day, lived form of ethnic identity included the importance of the Zulu language to people in shaping their Zulu identity, and concepts of custom and respect, especially inter-generational respectfulness, originating from a constructed rural past. However, although the past was important in terms of constructing a sense of 'Zuluness' amongst the people interviewed, it was not the heroic past upon which Buthelezi's construction of Zulu history places great stress.[172] Rather, it was the concept of a constructed, remembered, rural past, in which patriarchal relationships existed in a supposedly non-conflictual, harmonious fashion and community values of reciprocity were strong, that figured strongly in the consciousness of the people of Umlazi township.

The concept of reciprocal respect, especially in inter-generational and gender terms, was a central feature of the report. Many informants believed that the 'breakdown of respect' served as an important obstacle in the way of community harmony. Concepts of reciprocity and respect seem to have been very important in Zulu, and indeed other southern African, societies throughout the twentieth century. Early ethnographers such as Kidd were commentating on the submergence of the individual within the collectivity of the clan at the beginning of the century.[173] Krige, writing in the 1930s, similarly stresses the importance of hierarchy, collective consciousness, respect and reciprocity. She mentions for example that in Zulu society, 'the father...is respected and feared and his commands obeyed. A man does not talk when his father is present unless he is addressed, nor may he be free in his speech in his father's presence'.[174] The respectful attitude of young men towards their fathers is captured particularly well in a photograph taken by A.M. Duggan-Cronin in the late 1930s. The younger man is making a report to his father, a headman, and the photograph demonstrates the respectful attitude of the former towards the latter, and the intensity with which the younger man listens to what his father has to say.[175] Krige additionally states the following: '(A) native regards the kraal of every man having the same *isibongo* as himself as his own home, the

---

see C. Campbell, G. Mare and C. Walker, 'Evidence for an Ethnic Identity in the Life Histories of Zulu-Speaking Durban Township Residents', *JSAS*, Vol 21, No 2, 1995.

171 C. Campbell, G. Mare, and C. Walker, 'Just About Being', p.291.

172 For a recent overview of Buthelezi's constructions of Zulu history, see P. Forsyth, 'The Past in the Service of the Present: The Political use of History by Chief AN.M.G. Buthelezi', 1951-1991', *South African Historical Journal*, Vol 2, 1992.

173 D. Kidd, *Kaffir Socialism*, New York, 1969 (originally published 1908), p.17.

174 E. Krige, *Social System*, p.p.23-24. It is important to bear in mind the limitations to Krige's methodological approaches-see footnote 79. The linkage between hierarchy and reciprocity is demonstrated by Lonsdale's concept of 'moral economy' outlined in chapter five.

175 See Plate XCVII, 'Father and Son, in *The Bantu Tribes of South Africa: Reproductions of Photographic Studies by A. M. Duggan-Cronin. Vol 3, Section 3: The Zulu*, Cambridge, 1938.

owner being to him a father or a brother. He has only to walk in and make known his sib name, and he will be treated as one of the family'.[176]

Krige also comments on *hlonipha* customs and the importance of hierarchy in terms of age in shaping the consciousness of the historical actors involved. Her description portrays Zulu people as having their behaviour towards, and conceptions of, each other fundamentally moulded by these forms of custom, taboo, reciprocity and hierarchy.[177] She found that behaviour towards the father's relatives was generally more respectful than towards those of the mother, and that certain relationships were more patriarchal in nature than in other 'tribes'. The age-regiment system further enhanced the submergence of the individual amongst the collective.[178] Berglund, who carried out field research amongst particular rural Zulu communities between 1959 and 1970, makes similar observations.[179] His focus on anger and fertility as important expressions of power within clan systems, portrayed as innate qualities of the clan and only specific to men, is particularly illuminating with regard to the connections between hierarchy, violence and reciprocity.[180]

Furthermore, due largely to the longevity of the migrant labour process, these forms of control could be reformulated in order to forge a new ethnicity within a more urbanised context - as demonstrated by the emergence of *amalaita* gangs. This seems to be the essence of moral ethnicity. Young men in this context were reformulating the values of rural society in order to make sense of the more urbanised milieu within which they found themselves. Values such as respect for older men were being debated, but other aspects of rural identities were upheld in a reformulated fashion. 'Zuluness' was being openly debated. This is something that is missing in the work of Shula Marks. She is correct in arguing that (often Christian) elites were increasingly debating the meaning of 'Zuluness' throughout the twentieth century, and that this could lead to political tribalism (not her term) when their interests coincided with those of the state, allowing for the construction of a more ossified, static form of identity. However, she does not take fully into account the possibility of ordinary people reformulating their identities in an ethnicised sense, in order to express generational, gender and other interests.[181] These issues are subsumed by the concentration on the machinations of political elites.

This is not to say that there is no necessary connection between these differing levels of ethnicity. Moral ethnicity, which emerged in the context of colonialism, capitalist penetration

---

176 E. Krige, *Social System*, p.34.
177 Ibid, chapter 2.
178 Ibid, p.p.36-38.
179 A. Berglund, *Zulu Thought Patterns and Symbolism*, London, 1976.
180 See Chapter 8 for an analysis of Berglund's conceptualising of anger and fertility.
181 For a very interesting example of how ethnicised identities could be manipulated to serve gender interests in a contemporary context, see D. Webster, 'Ethnicity and Gender in a KwaZulu Border Community', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, 1991.

and the growth of individualism, can be, and was, captured by culture brokers and the apartheid regime in order to further their own political agendas. Campbell, Mare and Walker, who co-authored the study concerned with Umlazi district mentioned above, posit the argument that 'passive', lived forms of ethnic identity (which represent moral ethnicity in a non-politicised form) can articulate with the culturally brokered versions of Zulu political tribalism in times of rapid socio-economic change. They argue that politicised ethnicity did not appear to be an important factor in the identities of the Umlazi population as Umlazi is a relatively homogenous Zulu community. This contrasted with studies which analysed Zulu-speaking hostel dwellers in the Transvaal townships, where there was a more heterogeneous population and Zulu identity was consequently more under 'threat'.[182] They also found that many of the customs which have been historically perceived as 'Zulu' are becoming increasingly redundant in a poverty-stricken, unsettled urban milieu, despite the fact that many respondents showed considerable flexibility in reformulating them in order to adapt to township life. They accordingly found that Buthelezi has been more successful in mobilising rural people than urban people.[183]

Despite the many links between rural and urban people this differentiation still seems important.[184] It is possible that some of the more rurally attached Zulu people could be more prone to Buthelezi's machinations as his rhetoric more closely reflects their own consciousness, in terms of ritual and symbolic respect and reciprocity. The appeal of the past could resonate strongly with Zulu migrant workers, under threat from militant ANC 'comrades' who were intent on rendering the country ungovernable during apartheid's death throes. The setting up of military camps for youth by Buthelezi could also have instilled a strong desire to 'recapture' the past among some Zulu young men, especially as these camps included lengthy ideological inculcations of a re-constructed, 'glorious' Zulu warrior past.[185] The example of the *amalaita* demonstrates how elements of the *amabutho* age-regiment system could be reformulated in order to promote ethnic, criminal and wider, more radical consciousnesses based on Zulu historical experiences. Buthelezi's politically tribalist version does not allow for this flexible moral ethnic debate, and demonstrates how political tribalism has become the dominant version of Zulu ethnicity in contemporary times. For perhaps his hijacking of the past has instilled some young Zulu men with concepts of revived elements of this earlier form of military male socialisation. Buthelezi simultaneously, until recently, has argued that *Inkatha* also represents the true inheritance of the struggle against apartheid, therefore presenting a

---

[182] C. Campbell, G. Mare, and C. Walker, 'Just About Being', p.304. The authors specifically compare their study with that of Segal, which found that Zulu politicised ethnicity did come to the fore when directly threatened by the wider community. See L. Segal, 'The Human Face of Violence: Hostel Dwellers Speak', in *JSAS*, Vol 18, No1, 1991. These issues are more comprehensively discussed in chapter .

[183] C. Campbell, G. Mare, C. Walker, 'Just About Being', p.305.

[184] Interestingly, Marks does not perceive any differentiation between rural and urban forms of Zulu ethnicity in contemporary times - personal interview, May 1996.

[185] See Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi: Chief With a Double Agenda*, London, 1988, p.16.

'Janus-faced' representation of 'Zuluness' which also provides appeal to young men and women.[186]

Marks' work does capture fully the manipulatory elements of political tribalism, but her concentration on the agendas of political elites does not fully encapsulate the myriad of ways that ethnic identity can be reformulated over time. Ordinary Zulu people themselves re-worked definitions of 'Zuluness' throughout the twentieth century, which could merge with a variety of other mobilised identities. Segregation did entail politically tribalist versions of Zulu identity to emerge also, but this only became the dominant version of Zulu ethnicity with the policy of so-called 'separate development' under the apartheid regime. It seems important to recognise that ethnic identifications are not necessarily retrograde and harmful in themselves, it depends on how - and by whom - they are reformulated. As they often resonate with the very real historical life experiences of Zulu (and other) people, it is important not to dismiss them as a hindrance to wider forms of consciousness. Wider forms of nationalist consciousness could feasibly articulate with ethnicised forms of Zulu identity, as long as these nationalist culture brokers recognise that these identities are very meaningful to the people who adhere to them, thus avoiding their hi-jacking by political culture brokers bent upon their own political projects.

---

[186] For *Inkatha's* policies aimed at gaining the support of Zulu women, which also place emphasis on a reformulated Zulu past, see S. Hassim, 'Family, Motherhood and Zulu Nationalism: The Politics of the Inkatha Women's Brigade', *Feminist Review*, No 43, Spring, 1993. The appeal of the politically tribalist message to women is examined in more depth in chapter 7. However, it is also important to recognise the fact that support of *Inkatha* was also due to pragmatic, economic reasons.

Hassim refers to the various economic niches created for women by *Inkatha* and Mzala also points towards the economic advantages that can be gained from supporting the party, albeit in a coercive economic climate.

6. NATIONAL BOUNDARIES AND IDENTITY FORMATION: TWENTIETH CENTURY SOTHO IDENTITIES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF LESOTHO

The historical development of the Lesotho nation-state provides an interesting comparison with identity formation in South Africa. Despite various attempts to incorporate Lesotho within the national boundaries of South Africa throughout the twentieth century, it has always managed to retain its political independence, often in the face of considerable military and political opposition. This retention of independent status has resulted in various forms of Sotho ethnic and national identities, both within and outside of the country's borders.[1] Ironically, the collapse of apartheid has brought into question the viability of Lesotho remaining an independent nation-state. It has become increasingly economically dependent on South Africa since the late nineteenth century. Migrant labour income from South Africa has provided a vital buttress for its impoverished economy, in terms of both financial stability and employment provision.[2] In fact, labour has been one of Lesotho's main exports. Unfortunately, this dependency is becoming an increasing liability as South Africa attempts to deal with its own economic problems in the wake of apartheid. Reliance on South Africa has also influenced the various constructions of Sotho identities in the twentieth century.

This chapter sets out to explore the contested nature of Sotho identities. Migrant labour, the changing institution of the chieftainship, and contest gender roles are shown to be significant shaping factors. British colonial interference, the policies of the South African government in the apartheid era, and the influence of missionary activity are also demonstrated to be important elements. This examination also provides insights into ethnic identity formation both within and outside nation-state borders, whilst demonstrating that ethnicity results from internal as well as external dynamics, and is not solely reliant on the machinations of elite culture brokers.

---

[1] For a recent useful summary of the development of ethnic and national identities within Lesotho throughout the twentieth century see D. Coplan and T. Quinlan, 'A Chief by the People: Nation Versus State in Lesotho', *Africa*, Vol 67, No 1, 1997.

[2] In 1993 22.7% of the labour force was employed outside the country. Internally, unemployment is very high. One report measured the 1995 unemployment rate, in terms of adults having no income whatever, even in the informal sector, at around 35%. See R. Love, 'Lesotho: Inner to Outer Periphery', *ROAPE*, No 67, 1996. Although this report is very probably an exaggeration as many people probably gain some income from agriculture, unemployment is very serious.

6.1 The Beginnings of Sotho Identity: A Brief Overview of Nineteenth Century Lesotho State Formation[3]

The formation of the Lesotho nation-state is rooted in the early nineteenth century disruptions, upheavals and violence in southern Africa termed the *Mfecane* (or *lifaqane* in Sotho). The first Sotho ruler Moshoeshoe, established a mountain fortress at Thaba Bosiu in the 1820s, which provided security from these violent upheavals. He was thus able to receive large numbers of other refugees under his protection, adding to the population which had already arrived with him. It was at this point that the Sotho nation evolved.[4] By the time of the arrival of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society in 1833, Moshoeshoe and his Koena clan had gained predominance in Basutoland, as it came to be called in colonial times (although not all minor chiefs recognised his rule). Wars waged against Boer encroachment in the 1850s and mid-1860s, and the Gun War of 1880-1881 were further contributory factors in shaping Sotho identity. The wars against the Boers had resulted in considerable land loss to the Orange Free State, but Moshoeshoe avoided complete defeat by successfully appealing for British protection. This resulted in Basutoland becoming a British Protectorate in 1868, therefore firmly fixing national borders, avoiding further Boer encroachment and consequently heightening Sothos' sense of national identity within prescribed territorial boundaries. The British handed Basutoland over to direct Cape Colony rule in 1871. Cape rule proved very unpopular, due to imposed high levels of taxation aimed at pushing Sotho people into migrant labour, and the attempted banning of Sotho ownership of guns and spears. This resulted in the Gun War, which eventually provoked the British to resume direct rule in 1884.[5] This remained the case until Lesotho gained its independence in 1966, although it was never entirely certain whether or not Britain would allow South Africa to assimilate Lesotho within its own national boundaries throughout this period. This further heightened a sense of Sotho identity. Indeed, possibly the strongest element 'linking past and present has been vigorous resistance to any efforts aimed at incorporating Lesotho within South Africa or its colonial predecessors'.[6]

---

[3] This section is not intended to provide a critical analysis of the various elements which contributed to twentieth century Sotho identity formation. This is left to later sections, which demonstrate how earlier forms of Sotho culture and belief systems were reformulated in order to perpetuate the interests of particular interest groups, and also reformulated Sotho ethnic identities. What is outlined here are various elements of pre-colonial Sotho culture and value-systems which will later be demonstrated to feed into twentieth century forms of Sotho identities.

[4] There are several historical works which deal comprehensively with the nineteenth century history of Lesotho. See for example the following: L. Thompson, *Survival in Two Worlds: Moshoeshoe of Lesotho, 1786-1870*, London, 1975; P. Sanders, *Moshoeshoe, Chief of the Sotho*, London, 1975; E. Eldredge, *A South African Kingdom: The Pursuit of Security in Nineteenth-century Lesotho.* The two former mentioned works have to be read with caution, as they tend towards the 'Great Man' theory of history, reifying the importance of the founding king Moshoeshoe without taking fully into account wider socio-economic factors in the formation of Lesotho.

[5] See references in footnote 3. Also S. Burman, *Chiefdom Politics and Alien Law*, London, 1981.

[6] R. Weisfelder, 'The Basotho Nation-State: What Legacy for the Future?', *JMAS*, Vol 19, No 2, 1981.

The mobilisation of the chieftaincy, and particularly the consolidation of the position of the Paramount Chief, were central factors in the early formation of Sotho identity. The initial mobilisation of ethnicised identities in southern Africa often centred around the institution of the chieftaincy and the defence of land against expropriation, and this was particularly the case in Basutoland.[7] Casalis, a missionary from the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society established in Basutoland in 1861, made the following comment in his recordings of Sotho life and customs of the time:

> *(W)e observe, among these people, an almost superstitious respect for their sovereigns. There is something in this which resembles the ancient theory of the Divine right. The natives cannot conceive of a community, however limited it may be, that can order its own affairs, and do without a superior; or, to speak in their language a 'head'.*[8]

He later refers to the importance of social order in maintaining morality:

> *Morality among the people depends so entirely upon social order, that all political disorganisation is immediately followed by a state of degeneracy, which the re-establishment of order alone can rectify...The sudden and premature introduction of new laws and customs, and the imposition of a strange authority are for the same reason, equally fatal to their moral character. They rob the native of the only motive he can have for moderating his passions, which is the desire to maintain entire the order of things, in which are summed up all his ideas of prosperity and decency.*[9]

This latter comment, despite the essentialist undertones, was in hindsight a prescient warning. For colonial interference in the institution of the chieftaincy did indeed undermine social structures, although also contributing to the moral ethnic debate of what exactly it meant to be 'Sotho'. Additionally the centrality of the chieftaincy in peoples' consciousness, especially the symbolic significance of the kingship embodied in Moshoeshoe's rule, is hardly surprising

---

[7] See chapter 3 for a comprehensive periodisation of ethnic identities in South Africa. Also, W. Beinart, 'Chieftaincy and the Concept of Articulation: South Africa circa 1900-1950', *Canadian Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol 19, 1985. Sotho ethnic identity tends to follow this broad pattern, but with its own unique aspects as illustrated below.

[8] E. Casalis, *The Basutos or Twenty Three Years in South Africa.* Facsimile Reprint, Cape Town 1965 (originally published 1861).

[9] Ibid, pp.302-3.

considering the insecurity of the times.[10] Moshoeshoe had led the exodus to Thaba Bosiu and, through diplomatic manoeuvres, avoided defeat by the Boers and further incursions by other African armies. Perceptions of, and changes to, the institution of the chieftaincy, together with the symbolic significance of the monarchy and the capturing of this symbolic significance by various interest groups, played a major part in the development of Sotho ethnicised identities, and are still significant today.

6.2 Alien Law, Migrant Labour and the Contested Nature of the Chieftaincy: Sotho Ethnic Identities Prior to Independence

In referring to the contested nature of the chieftaincy in present day Lesotho, Quinlan comments:

> *From the perspective of the government and international organisations, social order is best based upon a notion of nationality that can be integrated into the international political and economic framework of nation-states. From the perspective of the rural populace, this order must include institutions which stem from local concerns, and which can then promote local needs in the national and international arenas. It is in this contest of approach that the chieftainship becomes an important symbol of political identity and organisation.*[11]

Thus 'the chieftainship is a faultline in the contest between rural residents, chiefs, the government and other external agencies about what the appropriate political order should be'.[12] In many respects this is a useful distinction in analysing Sotho ethnicised identities. It takes into account ethnic nationalist/political tribalist state imposed identities from 'above', and the more fluid, contested, moral ethnic identities emanating from 'below'. There are problems

---

[10] However, it is important to carefully analyse the reasons why people sought security through the chieftaincy at this time. The argument that Sotho people identified with the nation-state in pursuit of security is correct but banal. The pursuit of security is perhaps not the most helpful factor in determining the particular identifications which arose at this time. Eldredge's work (see footnote 3) has been criticised in this context by several radical scholars. See for example the following: T. Maloka, ' "All Chiefs are Sheperds": Populism and Labour Migration in Colonial Lesotho, 1886-1940', *Institute of Commonwealth Studies Seminar Paper*, October 1994; C. Murray's book review of Eldredge's work in *African Affairs*, Vol 94, No 374, 1995; M. Thabane, 'A Mutual Benefit Utopia where Expoitation was Unknown? Elizabeth Eldredge's Liberal Interpretation of Social Relations in Nineteenth-Century Lesotho', *South African Historical Journal*, No 34, 1996. However whilst I agree with the general thrust of these radical scholars' critiques, I do not in turn agree with their emphasis on forming class divisions as the primary motor behind identity formation. This is especially apparent in the work of Maloka and Thabane. Forming class divisions were important factors in the formation of ethnic and nationalist identities, but it is also important to take into account the self-perceptions of Sotho peoples when attempting to explain the formation of their identities, and these did not necessarily correspond with a forming class consciousness.

[11] T. Quinlan, ' "Marena A Lesotho": Chiefs, Politics and culture in Lesotho'. PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, June 1994, p.10.

[12] Ibid, p.181.

with this conceptualisation however. Despite acknowledging popular rural concepts of the chieftaincy, Quinlan's analysis does ultimately focus on a macro/national level. This is perhaps due to the fact that his thesis is concerned primarily with Lesotho, and not Sotho communities outside of Lesotho's national boundaries. Therefore he does not take fully into account the variety of forms which Sotho ethnicised identities could take in the twentieth century. It is important to recognise the centrality of the chieftaincy in formulating ethnic identifications in twentieth century Lesotho, but it is equally important to recognise other factors. Migrant labour, and urbanisation and residence in South Africa could lead to reformulations of Sotho identity which arose from previous cultural values, but without necessarily being centred around the chieftainship. The following therefore attempts to build upon Quinlan's concept of the chieftaincy as a 'faultline' between different concepts of Sotho identities, whilst additionally analysing other forms of Sotho identity formation.

After British rule was established in 1884, the small colonial administration - in time-honoured British colonial fashion - set about installing the structures of 'indirect rule'. In order to do this, the administration sought to reformulate pre-colonial forms of Sotho government structures. Prior to the entrenchment of British rule, Sotho people living in Basutoland had established a popular forum for airing grievances to the chiefs, called the *pitso*. The community therefore had some opportunity to criticise the chiefs openly regarding their rule. The chiefs resorted to several methods in order to ensure they gained a positive response.

> *(W)oe to any who have been imprudent enough to take undue advantage of the liberty of speech! If the potentate they have attacked happens to be a witty and sensible man, he will make them pay dearly for the impunity on which they reckoned. This is the fatal hour which gives birth to nicknames, which cling with the tenacity of a shadow to those on whom they are bestowed.*[13]

Bestowing derogatory names on people who were perceived to be acting against the social norms of the community seems to have been a common occurrence in pre-colonial and colonial Basutoland, and throughout southern Africa in general. Lestrade, an ethnologist working in the Native Affairs Department in the 1930s, refers to the 'fondness of the Basotho for giving people significant names, and their aptness in finding appropriate ones'.[14] This seems to correspond with a larger social context, whereby chiefdoms and other communities sought to reproduce their own moral universe and social order by deriding behaviour outside

---

[13] E. Casalis, *The Basutos*, p.p.235-236. The importance attached to oratory skills by many rural African communities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries may be linked to this 'naming' process. See below for further comments.

[14] A.M. Duggan-Cronin, *The Bantu Tribes of Southern Africa: Reproductions of Photographic Studies, Vol Two, Section Three. The Suto-Chuana Tribes. Sub-Group Three, The Southern Basotho*, plate LXXVIII. The photographic plate in question refers to a Sotho girl named Lipuo, which according to Lestrade roughly translates as 'Chatterbox'.

of expected norms. Schapera, for example, refers to the use of 'mockery' songs by 1930s rural Kgatla communities in order to deride young women who become pregnant outside of marriage.[15] Hamilton and Wright's study of 'Lala' identity demonstrates how forms of derogatory naming could lead to ethnicised stereotyping in a pre-colonial context, and therefore without the implementation of colonial constructions of ethnicity. Furthermore, this ethnicised derogatory form of naming could be re-appropriated in a more positive fashion if socio-economic circumstances changed.[16]

This need to re-impose order, referred to by both Quinlan, and much earlier by Casalis, resonates with Douglas' argument that '(i)deas about separating, purifying, demarcating and punishing transgressions have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience'.[17] Communal needs to re-impose order after transgressions of moral universes, seem to have been reflected in the increasingly contested nature of the chieftaincy after the imposition of British colonial rule. For people sought to re-establish their sense of identity through this changing institution in order to make sense of the considerable socio-economic changes being wrought by colonial and capitalist penetration, religious influence and the hegemony of the South African state through the implementation of the migrant labour process.[18]

The British sought to reconstruct the institution of the chieftaincy by synthesising elements of its social structure with British introduced concepts of government. In 1903 the *pitso* system was replaced by the Basutoland National Council. This Council was given statutory status in 1910 and was transformed into a Legislative Council in 1960. The king was now re-titled 'Paramount Chief' and was demarcated equal powers with the British Residential Commissioner. British Assistant Commissioners worked with principal chiefs in their respective districts. The Cape Town based High Commissioner held the reins of legislative power. The first meeting of the Basutoland National Council adopted the so-called 'Laws of Lerotholi', supported by the then Paramount Chief Lerotholi in order to strengthen his position, and also by the Resident Commissioner Godfrey Lagden and the High Commissioner Alfred Milner. These 'Laws' were the start of the systematic entrenchment of the structure of the chieftaincy, 'and did not address the system of checks on the powers of the chiefs'.[19] The

---

[15] See I. Schapera, 'Pre-Marital Pregnancy and Native Opinion. A Note on Social Change', *Africa*, Vol 6, No 1, 1933, pp.55-56. Also chapter 7.

[16] C. Hamilton and J. Wright, 'the Making of the 'AmaLala': Ethnicity, Ideology and Relations of Subordination in a Pre-Colonial Context', *SAHJ*, Vol 22, 1990.

[17] M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London, 1969p.162. See chapter 7 for a more comprehensive analysis of Douglas' concepts.

[18] See below for how this fits with the diverse routes to modernity followed by Sotho peoples in the twentieth century, and the proliferation of contested identities which were created as a result.

[19] T. Maloka, ' "All Chiefs are Shepherds": Populism and Labour Migration in Colonial Lesotho, 1886-1940', *Institute of Commonwealth Studies Seminar Paper*, October 1994. P.5.

advent of Imperial Rule meant that the chiefs no longer had to depend on popular support to retain their dominance. Therefore exploitation tended to proliferate from 1884 onwards.[20]

These changes to the institution of the chieftaincy resulted in a variety of political responses, all of which played upon different conceptions of what it was to be 'Sotho', whilst additionally reflecting forming class affiliations. These early attempts at opposing colonial rule did not argue for a wholesale abandonment of the chieftaincy, however. As such they seem to demonstrate diverse attempts to re-establish a social order which was disintegrating through the removal of popular checks on chiefs' powers. In the first half of the twentieth century peoples' organisation against the abuse of powers by chiefs centred around the Basutoland Progressive Association, formed in 1908, and Lekhotla la Bafo, formed in 1919. The difference between the two groups' objectives was most pronounced with respect to the chieftaincy. The Progressive Association supported reforms which would circumscribe chiefs' powers, whilst Lekhotla la Bafo aimed at restoring the pre-colonial structure of the chieftaincy. Many of Lekhotla la Bafo's appeals and public addresses defended the institution of the chieftaincy, whilst decrying the exploitative attitudes of individual chiefs. Furthermore, this exploitation was argued to be the result of colonial reform, missionary interference and the detrimental effects of migrant labour siphoned off to the South African gold and diamond mines. The party also endeavoured to set up self-help schemes which would preserve Sotho political, economic and cultural institutions from being eroded by the colonial system.[21]

The approach of the Progressive Association differed in that it attempted to reduce the influence of the chieftaincy through working within the existing system, for example by attempting to gain more seats on the National Council. The difference between the two parties was partially the result of the dissimilar social groups which supported them. The Progressive Party tended to draw its support from the tiny educated Sotho elite and reflected their interests. Lekhotla la Bafo, although including leaders who were also educated through the auspices of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, largely drew its support from small farmers and the peasantry, and largely reflected their interests.[22] This is representative of the increasing moral ethnic debate regarding what it meant to be Sotho. However, both parties sought to reform the worst excesses of the chieftaincy, which had arisen in the wake of the introduction of the National Council and the removal of popular checks on the said institution's power. One of the most important grievances centred around the abuse of the practice of

---

[20] For in-depth analyses of early forms of this exploitation see E. Eldredge, *A South African Kingdom*, chapter 12, and S. Burman, *Chiefdom Politics*, chapter 12 and epilogue.

[21] See R. Edgar, *Prophets With Honour: A Documentary History of Lekhotla la Bafo*, Braamfontein, 1987; Introduction and Documents 12-19 (p.p. 79-136).

[22] Ibid, p.26.

letsema, or tribute labour.[23] In pre-colonial times this involved chiefs requesting people to form work parties to cultivate certain of their (the chiefs') lands. This was undertaken willingly in pre-colonial times as it involved reciprocal rights. In pre-colonial times chiefs relied heavily on the co-operation of their people in order to maintain their social status, greater wealth and the military security of their chiefdom. Therefore it was in their interest to provide for their people in return for their labour. However, with the introduction of colonial rule, and the introduction of the National Council, chiefs no longer had to rely on the goodwill of their people, and abuses of the system were commonplace.[24] Together with the abuses of the 'placing' system, the misuse of *letsema* led to much unrest directed at the abuse of power by chiefs.[25]

The increasingly contested role of the chieftaincy was not the only element of debated Sotho identity in this period however. The changing nature of gender roles, itself closely related to the upheavals resulting from the entrenchment of the migrant labour system, also contributed to the diversity of the moral ethnic debate of the time. In fact, male migrant labourers were migrating to work on the farms and railways of the Cape as early as 1820. Therefore, 'the system of labour migrancy...(was)...coeval with the historical existence of the Basotho state'.[26] Nevertheless, at this stage Basutoland was not reliant on migrant labour remittances in order to prop up its economy. During the late nineteenth century Basutoland was a 'grain basket' of South Africa, exporting wool, hides, grain and livestock to the Orange Free State and the new diamond city of Kimberley. This was despite the earlier loss of much land to the Orange Free State as a result of the agreements culminating in the protection of British colonial rule. However, the introduction of the Cape railway at the turn of the century, which resulted in the cheap imports of Australian and American grain, government reforms which were actively biased in favour of white farmers, a devastating rinderpest epidemic in 1896-7, ecological degradation due to lack of land, serious droughts in 1905, 1912-13, and 1932-33, and the 1929 depression, ensured Basutoland became an impoverished labour reserve with its primary income deriving from migrant labour.[27]

---

[23] See T. Maloka, ' "All Chiefs are Shepherds" ', p.p.8-9. Also S. Jingoes, *A Chief is a Chief by the People*, London, 1975, p.p. 173-180.

[24] This is not to suggest that these abuses rose solely in the era of British rule from 1884 onwards. Burman refers to abuses of the system before the final entrenchment of British rule - S. Burman, *Chiefdom Politics*, p.p.76-77. However, these earlier forms of abuse may well have been dealt with by popular forms of justice. Jingoes refers to people literally thrashing their chiefs if they attempted to abuse the system - S. Jingoes, *A Chief is a Chief*, p.178. However, this form of popular justice, itself an attempt to restore the social and moral order prevalent at the time, would not have been acceptable in the era of British rule, which relied on the appropriation of the chieftaincy in order to implement 'indirect rule'.

[25] The abuses of the 'placing' system, itself partially a result of the impoverishment of Lesotho's economy, provoked the colonial administration to implement further reforms on the institution. This inadvertently ensured more abuses of chiefly power.

[26] D. Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals: The Word Music of South Africa's Basotho Migrants*, London, 1994, p.4.

[27] Most good general histories deal with this change from South Africa's 'grain basket' to impoverished labour reserve. See for example, J. Omer-Cooper, *History of Southern Africa*, London, 1994, (2nd ed), p.p.252-262. The extent of this impoverishment is best brought out in C. Murray's two works: *Families Divided: The Impact of Migrant Labour in Lesotho*, London, 1981 and *Black Mountain: Land, Class and Power in the Eastern Orange Free State, 1880s to 1980s*, London, 1992. The latter work concentrates primarily on the areas surrounding Lesotho, but nevertheless provides many penetrating insights.

The gradual impoverishment of Basutoland, and the entrenchment of the migrant labour process, wrought considerable changes in gender roles during the first half of the twentieth century. Reformulated constructions of Sotho identity were directly related to these changes. Prior to the full entrenchment of migrant labour Basutoland had a very patriarchal culture. In pre-colonial times, the sex of a newly born child resulted in deeply symbolic acts which stressed the gendered nature of rural Sotho socialisation processes.[28] Sotho communities reflected many of the facets common to rural societies in southern Africa at the time with regard to the role of women.[29] Bridewealth, *hlonipha* avoidances, and male domination of property and land, were all apparent in 'traditional' rural Sotho communities. Migrant labour began to break down this social structure, leading to a proliferation of discourses regarding what was 'appropriate' behaviour for a Sotho woman. This in turn fed into reformulated ethnicised identities. Reproduction was central to the role of rural Sotho women in the nineteenth century. Casalis comments that even people who became ardent Christian converts regarded sterility as disastrous in a marriage, and was the only cause of divorce not subject to litigation.[30] The advent of migrant labour began to affect this patriarchal conceptualisation of women, and discourses evolved centring around either the supposed 'conservative' nature of Sotho women, or paradoxically their 'wanton' behaviour, especially those who migrated to South Africa. Writing in the 1960s, Ashton comments on rural conceptions of sterility, which seem to have been influenced by the process of migrant labour:

> *Failure to conceive may be due to a number of causes. One is...namely that the semen does not reach the womb...another is promiscuity. If a woman has intercourse with different men before her womb has 'closed', their semen struggle for sole possession of the womb until all are ejected so that no fusion with the woman's blood takes place: hence the notorious barrenness of prostitutes and female sexual maniacs; hence, too, the seriousness of a wife's adultery which may thwart her husband's procreation and lead to her sterility, quite apart from the danger of her introducing her lover's 'strange' blood into the family.*[31]

---

[28] H. Ashton, *The Basuto*, p.29. It is interesting to note that the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP) adopted the Knobkerry as its party symbol in the 1960s (p.xvii, ibid). This is suggestive of concepts of masculinity involving fighting ability being transposed onto a militant African Nationalist context. As will be demonstrated below, the BCP was very patriarchal itself.

[29] For a general overview, which should nevertheless be read with caution due to its tendency to materialist reductionism, see J. Guy, 'Analysing Pre-Capitalist Societies in Southern Africa', *JSAS*, vol 14, No 1, 1987. For a more specific, compact summary of rural Sotho constructions of women's roles at the time see S. Burman, 'Fighting a Two-Pronged Attack: the Changing Legal Status of Women in Cape-Ruled Basutoland, 1872-1884', in C. Walker, *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*, London, 1990. Although Burman's article specifically refers to the short period of Cape rule, her summary does reflect practices which were continued into the twentieth century.

[30] E. Casalis, *The Basutos*, p.p.184-185.

[31] H. Ashton, *The Basuto*, p.26.

Themes of female fertility and sterility were prominent in pre-colonial rural southern African societies, and remained so throughout the first half of the twentieth century.[32] Ashton's reference to the 'notorious barrenness' of prostitutes and so-called 'female sexual maniacs' is interesting, as this resonates with older male representations of the 'dangers' inherent in women and the changes wrought in gender roles by the migrant labour system. There was a tendency in rural communities of the period to regard women and female sexuality as potentially dangerous to men and cattle.[33] Oppositions were often constructed between healing and fertilising agents and dangerous and sterilising forces. For example, women's' menstrual blood was considered dangerous to men, whilst male semen was considered healing and fertilising.[34] As one of the main roles of women was to reproduce the male line of succession, sterility was a serious problem and often resulted in considerable loss of status. Furthermore, sterility was usually considered to be a female condition, and it was rarely attributed to men.[35]

These binary oppositions resonate with Douglas' above-mentioned reference to the construction of binary opposites in order to impose an order upon untidy reality. The construction of 'conservative' and 'wanton' representations of Sotho women seem to reflect a male reformulation of this need to re-impose order in a time of considerable social and economic flux. From the 1930s onwards, many Sotho women began migrating in considerable numbers to the Rand (although this exodus started in the 1920s), often initially in search of errant husbands who had not returned home from the mines and were not providing financial support. Many of these women failed to find their husbands, or when they did, failed to get them to return home.[36] Subsequently many women forged a tenuous independence by participating in illicit beer-brewing and prostitution.[37] Sotho traditionalists inveighed heavily against the resulting male loss of control of these women and, together with colonial and mine administrations of the time, constructed a picture of 'wanton' urban Sotho women, who were destroying the social fabric of 'traditional' Sotho culture. This ignored the reality of the situation, whereby women sought to carve out a more independent life for themselves which avoided patriarchal domination. Interestingly, women who remained in rural Basutoland gradually gained a reputation for 'conservatism' which again was not a true portrayal of reality.

---

[32] For a useful overview see A. Kuper, *Wives for Cattle: Bridewealth and Marriage in Southern Africa*, London, 1982, especially chapter 2. Kuper should be read with caution, however, due to a somewhat ahistorical approach.

[33] Ibid, p.18. Also see chapter 7 which refers to similar findings by other anthropologists.

[34] Ibid, p.19.

[35] H. Ashton, *The Basutos*, p.27.

[36] P. Bonner, ' "Desirable or Undesirable Basotho Women?" Liquor, Prostitution and the Migration of Basotho Women to the Rand, 1920-1945', in C. Walker (ed), *Women and Gender.*

[37] This issue has received a comprehensive analysis in chapter 7, and therefore will only be summarised here.

This representation of 'conservative' Sotho women reflects a common theme inherent in the discourses of many ethnic and nationalist culture brokers.[38]

Basutoland was no exception. Even academics inadvertently contributed to this 'conservative' identity construction. Sotho women were considered a fundamental element in ensuring the gaining of power of the 'conservative' Basutoland National Party in 1965. Conversely Sotho men, due to their experience in political discussion and traditional courts, and their wider experience of the conditions under apartheid, supposedly 'were more able...to understand and support the ...strategy for the liberation of South Africa and the demi-socialist rhetoric of the 'radical' parties'.[39] Women were popularly supposed to have won the day for the Basutoland National Party due to the absence of many men working in South Africa under the migrant labour system.[40]

The rigidification of women's supposed personality traits had little to do with older, rural forms of Sotho culture. Indeed, formulations among the Sotho were less explicitly tied to anatomy and sexuality than they were among the British administration. For 'traditional' Sotho, 'expectations of proper behaviour for men and women were contingent upon social context, a dangerous if not revolutionary concept in the eyes of the colonial masters'.[41] The binary oppositions regarding women's fertility and sexuality classified 'mainly states and conditions or phases rather than unchanging essences'.[42] Men equally could be prone to behaviour which threatened the sanctity and reproduction of the homestead.[43] The proponents of politically tribalist and ethnic nationalist ideologies tend to ignore this factor when reifying constructions of 'tradition' tailor-made to suit their own political agendas. Patriarchal discourses inherent in political tribalism essentialises the gender roles of men and women, not taking fully into account the more fluid nature of pre-colonial and early colonial rural communities' gendered ideologies.

Many women portrayed as essentially 'conservative' by academics and politicians alike were often quite radical for their time, especially between the 1920s and the gaining of independence. They thus transcended the simple dichotomy whereby men were perceived to be dominant in the public, political sphere, and women entrenched in the domestic, private sphere. Their achievements were all the more remarkable considering the inequalities prevalent in Sotho communities in this period, inequalities moreover which were exacerbated

---

[38] For various examples of this form of gendered identity construction see F. Anthias and N. Yuval-Davis, *Woman-Nation-State*, London, 1989, and G. Mare, *Ethnicity and Politics in South Africa*, London, 1993. Also see chapter 7.
[39] M. Epprecht, 'Women's "Conservatism" and the Politics of Gender in Late Colonial Lesotho', *JAH*, Vol 36, 1995, p.29.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid, p.40.
[42] A. Kuper, *Wives for Cattle*, p.19.
[43] Ibid.

by the British administration's attempts to impose its own conceptualisations of morality upon Sotho rural communities. Writing with reference to the 1950s Jingoes, who himself embodied a diverse mix of 'radical' and 'conservative' ideologies, implied that the sons of chiefs were losing 'traditional' 'masculine' traits of leadership due partly to the fact that they were being raised by women and not in the chief's court, as many men were absent through migrant labour.[44] It was possible for women themselves to become chiefs or chiefs' regents in Sotho communities, although this was not often to the liking of male traditionalists.[45]

The respect accorded women chiefs did not diminish due to their sex however. Their status stemmed from the office of the chieftaincy as an institution rather than the individual herself. In essence, woman chiefs were 'honourary men'. This is evidenced by the following quote from chief Mantsebo, when her authority was challenged by the senior Koena widow, Mahali:

> *I call myself a man because I am a Paramount Chief...You are my wife because I was married to you by my father. I say you are married to me because I have taken the name of my husband your father and therefore all the upkeeping should be in my hands.*[46]

In fact many women chiefs actively sought to gain the vote for women, and even to abolish the patriarchal inheritance customs inherent in rural culture. Even in instances where the colonial authorities accused woman chiefs of being 'anti-progressive', the reality was somewhat different. For example, the opposition of some women chiefs to so-called colonial 'improvement schemes' in the 1930s and 1940s was not some form of anti-modernisation movement, but rather a defence of peasants' ways of life in the face of what would have been disastrous land reforms resulting in considerable erosion.[47] Nevertheless, some Sotho women often seem to have regarded the chieftaincy as a main bulwark of their identity. The impact of rural Sotho women on the outcome of the 1965 election, and the reasons for their voting pattern will be analysed later. However there were other forms of reformulated Sotho identity arising in this period, especially in the 1930s and 1940s.

The formation of *Ma-Rashea* ('Russian') gangs in urban South Africa are a particularly poignant case in point. Originating in the late 1940s, these gangs developed a particular form of heavily masculine Sotho identity suited to the poverty stricken, urban milieu within which they lived. The name *Ma-Rashea* itself demonstrates the widening consciousness of Africans

---

[44] S. Jingoes, *A Chief is a Chief*, p.152. For insights into Jingoes' own life, which illuminates much in terms of ethnic and nationalist identity development, see chapter 9.
[45] H. Ashton, *The Basuto*, p.198.
[46] Cited in M. Epprecht, 'Women's "Conservatism" ', p.39.
[47] See for example K. Showers and G. Malahleha, 'Oral Evidence in Historical Environmental Impact Assessment: Soil Conservation in the 1930s and 1940s', *JSAS*, Vol 18, 1992.

working in an urban context, and the integration of broader global issues within their own life-worlds. Inspired by white fears of the supposed post-war threat posed by Stalin, the name 'provided a suitable antonym for one of their most feared enemies, the *tsotsi* 'Americans' gang of Johannesburg'.[48] Originating from migrant Sotho males who grouped together in order to defend themselves against *tsotsi* and other criminal assaults, the *Ma-Rashea* utilised much Sotho symbolism in a reformulated manner, in order to give themselves a particular identity within an urban milieu.[49] Clothing and weaponry were badges of an urban ethnicised identity, and previous chiefly divisions in Lesotho were re-ignited in this urban context. The historic rivalries which had arisen between Moshoeshoe's heir, Letsie I, who was based at Matsieng, and his second and third sons Molapo and Masupha, based further to the North, were reproduced by the *Ma-Rashea,* who divided into 'Matsieng' and 'Ha Molapo' factions. These factions fought amongst themselves, but also united against urban *tsotsi*, and other criminal, gangs. Thus the *Ma-rashea* sought to reproduce more regionalised Sotho identities than that represented by the Basutoland nation-state. The *Ma-Rashea* form of Sotho identity was thus both larger and smaller than that of the Sotho nation-state. Larger, in that it transcended state boundaries, and smaller, in that it reworked previous sub-national rural Sotho identities in a specific urban milieu. Jingoes additionally refers to his own experience of intra-Sotho rivalries, including *Ma-Rashea*, amongst Sotho mine-workers, arguing that this was far more prominent than inter-ethnic conflict. He also refers to previous chiefly rivalries as the prime motivator for violence.[50]

Blanket styles, which had become symbolic of Sotho (and other African) identities in the nineteenth century[51], were re-worked by these *Ma-Rashea* factions in order to promote their own specific, ethnicised identities.[52] *Ma-Rashea* dance songs also often represented rural regional, rather than national, forms of unity and identification.[53] Other forms of previously

---

[48] D. Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals*, p.189.

[49] Together with reformulated Sotho ethnic identities on the gold mines, these identities broadly correspond with the second chronological period of ethic identity construction outlined in chapter 3.

[50] S. Jingoes, *A Chief is a Chief*, p.66.

[51] Thabane has argued that blanket wearing was, and is, not a symbolic representation of Sotho culture and identity, due to the fact that it was introduced in mass-produced fashion by Europeans in the nineteenth century, thus allowing indigenous industries little chance of competing - see M. Thabane, 'Some Economic and Technological Factors Behind the Adoption of the Blanket as Basotho Dress', *Review of Southern African Studies*, Vol 1, No 1, 1995. However, just because blankets originated from outside of Basutoland (as it was called at the time), this did not mean that they were forced on Sotho people in the roles of 'passive' victims of market forces. Sotho people invested these items with their own symbolic meanings, and paradoxically Thabane implicitly recognises this when he refers to blanket wearing as a symbol of nationalist social elites emerging in Lesotho in the 1960s (p.p.43-44, ibid). Ashton also argues that rural Sotho people in the 1950s and 1960s regarded the blanket as Sotho traditional or national dress (H. Ashton, *The Basuto*, p.33). Sotho people did adapt the blanket for their own specific and pragmatic usages, and they were fundamental in representing a plethora of re-worked Sotho identity forms from the nineteenth century onwards. They also presented a form of clothing which did not involve the lengthy process of production involved in making clothing out of skins. See also E. Eldredge, *A South African Kingdom*, p. 7, and K. Tranberg-Hansen, 'Transnational Biographies and Local Meanings: Used Clothes Practices in Lusaka', *JSAS*, Vol 2, No 1, 1995.

[52] D. Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals*, p.p.187-188. Blankets were also used for weapon concealment. See J. Guy and M. Thabane, 'The *Ma-Rashea*: A Participant's Perspective', in B. Bozzoli (ed), *Class, Community and Conflict: South African Perspectves*, Johannesburg, 1987.

[53] D. Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals*, p.189.

rural Sotho culture which seem to have been adapted in an urban context by the *Ma-Rashea* include participation in violence and sport (the boundaries between these activities often being quite fluid), and an appreciation of oral skills, especially in a legal context. One *Ma-Rashea* member specifically linked the tactics of violent fighting to the tactics of football, a sport becoming popular amongst migrant workers.[54] There seems to be a correspondence here with previous rural forms of violence ('sport'?) in which herdboys participated.[55] Jingoes provides a vivid portrayal of herdboy activities in his youth in the early part of the twentieth century, which often involved stick-fighting according to specific rules and customs, but which sometimes broke down into more uncontrolled fighting between rival groups of herdboys disputing grazing territory. His description implies that herdboys willingly participated in this form of behaviour, and often found it exciting, exhilarating and enjoyable.[56] Concepts of male self-worth, tied into fighting prowess and courage in battle, are readily apparent both in rural herdboy, and urban *Ma-Rashea*, morality.

Ma-Rashea members also seem to have appreciated the oral skills and legal manipulations of lawyers.[57] Jingoes has similar respect for legal process and tactics.[58] He infers that this was due to the informal socialisation process of young boys, which involved participation in local rural legal disputes at the village *lekhotla* (court).[59] Appreciation of legal process seems to have been a fundamental part of young male socialisation. Initiation schools, which were central to the transition from 'boyhood' to 'manhood', even had their own courts which doubtless added to the respect for law and custom.[60] Male respect and appreciation of legal process seems to have been widespread in rural pre-colonial southern African societies, and lasted into the first half of the twentieth century. 'Red' Xhosa male socialisation processes involved similar facets, and often involved a move from 'boyhood' 'violent' behaviour to an appreciation of solving disputes by eloquence, argument and knowledge of legal procedure.[61] By the 1940s, however, boys' initiation schools were well in decline, due partially to the opposition and increasing influence of missionaries.[62] Indeed, this decline was noticeable as early as the 1920s. Josiel Lefela, president of Lekhotla la Bafo, was inveighing against the

---

[54] J. Guy and M. Thabane, 'The *Ma-Rashea*', p.441.

[55] However, this is a theoretically problematic area of investigation. Metaphors of warfare were, and are, often used in sport in western societies. See for example J. Naubrught and T. Chandler (eds), *Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity*, London, 1996. Themes of masculinity, nationalism and other forms of identity are often intertwined with sporting achievement, and these relationships require much more detailed research.

[56] S. Jingoes, *A Chief is a Chief*, chapter 2.

[57] J. Guy and M. Thabane, 'The *Ma-Rashea*', p.441.

[58] See S. Jingoes, *A Chief is a Chief*, chapter 8, which is aptly entitled 'Without Law, People are Animals'.

[59] Ibid, p.216.

[60] H. Ashton, *The Basuto*, p.p.225-226.

[61] P. and I. Mayer, 'Socialisation by Peers: The Youth Organisation of the Red Xhosa', in P. Mayer (ed), *Socialisation: the Approach From Social Anthropology*, London, 1972. Also see chapter 8.

[62] H. Ashton, *The Basuto*, p.p.55-56.

decline of initiation schools due to what he perceived as missionary influence, as early as 1928. He linked this decline as a direct attack on Sotho nation-hood.[63]

It is likely that many of the *Ma-Rashea* were un-initiated, or at least sought to avoid initiation.[64] The appreciation of legal process by *Ma-Rashea* members seems to have centred around lawyers' abilities to facilitate their release from a potential prison sentence, whereas Jingoes sought to promote rural concepts of legality, and linked it directly to the institution of the chieftainship and a form of Sotho nationalism. Nevertheless, the similarities between rural male Sotho socialisation processes, and *Ma-Rashea* moral codes are striking, especially in the context of violence, sport and legal systems. Guy and Thabane argue the following regarding the values inherent in an ex-member of a *Ma-Rashea* gang whom they interviewed:

> *His philosophy is not an abstract one, but emerges from concrete situations. He sees life as a struggle, a fight, in which one must always be consolidating one's forces, undermining the opposition, and developing a strategy which avoids the obvious, frontal attack and strikes where it is not expected. to succeed in life one has to be continually wary, calculating, and prepared to attack when necessary.*

This suggests that *Ma-Rashea* gangs represented a newly forged, fluid form of Sotho ethnicised identity, drawing on previous cultural building blocks in order to construct an identity more suited to the brutal, violent, poverty-stricken urban context, which nevertheless offered opportunities for circumscribed independence and wealth if Sotho banded together and 'thought on their feet'.[65] The *Ma-Rashea* existed at a time when rural values were coming under question, but consequently open for reformulation, the essence of the moral ethnic debate. As with the *indlavini*, and other forms of rural and urban male gang formations in the first half of the twentieth century, the *Ma-Rashea* formed their own moral code of sorts, suggesting again that their values represented an attempt 'to restore order to an essentially untidy experience'.[66] The liminal status of *Ma-Rashea* moral codes is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that fighting with knobkerries was abandoned by the late 1950s, replaced by pistols, as these gangs reached the height of their popularity, and conflicts between

---

[63] J. Lefela, 'Presidential Address, Matsieng, 1928, quoted in R. Edgar, *Prophets With Honour*, p.80. Interestingly, this decline reversed itself in the 1950s, when Sotho culture brokers sought to preserve all things 'Sotho'. This revival accelerated from independence onwards, due to the decline of the Catholic church's influence and a growing distrust of foreign influences (D. Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals*, p.104).

[64] J. Guy and M. Thabane, 'The *Ma-Rashea*', p.436.

[65] This is graphically illustrated by the quote of Guy and Thabane's informant, ibid, p.441.

[66] Chapter 8 provides a more in-depth analysis of ethnic male gangs in the first half of the twentieth century.

themselves and other ethnic and criminal gangs became more numerous. This hints at a gradual absorption into *tsotsi*-type culture. By the 1960s, with the full implementation of apartheid and influx control, *Ma-Rashea* gangs declined in numbers and significance. But their legend has persisted. 'Today the term 'russian' is used to label everything from petty thugs to armed robbers, strike-breakers, police goons, and hired assassins, perpetuating and inflaming the antagonism between rural and urban Africans'.[67] This is despite the fact that the original gangs attempted to mould together rural and urban values, in direct contrast to the 'Red'/'School' divide in the Eastern Cape.

During the twentieth century, the migrant labour process threatened the status of Sotho chiefs, especially after the increased migratory exodus from Basutoland as a result of the devastating drought in the early 1930s. New forms of Sotho identity were being forged, reflecting conditions on the mines and in urban areas, and these did not always accord with chiefly power. The above mentioned abuses of power by chiefs, and the inadequacies of the placement system[68], led to the British administration drastically reducing the numbers of chiefs through various reforms from the late 1930s until the 1950s. These reforms resulted in the notorious so-called 'medicine murders' of the 1940s, as chiefs sought to retain their status. Meanwhile, on the mines, Sotho migrant workers were forging a Sotho identity centred around specific technical skills, especially the arduous task of shaft-sinking or lashing.[69] This form of ethnic identification lasted from the 1930s until well into the 1960s, when technological developments increasingly removed the need for manual shaft-sinking.

It is interesting to compare these mine identities with earlier, rural forms of male socialisation. Both exhibit similar forms of masculine identity construction, centred on the building of communal bonding, strength and endurance. In their study of ethnic identity formations on the gold mines in this period, Guy and Thabane comment that most of the ex-mineworkers they interviewed had positive memories of their time on the mines:

> *Lashing was associated with youth, strength and endurance. One gains the impression that work in the shafts, the need for co-operation and teamwork, the noise, the energy expended, the praise and the privileges, did something to overcome the isolation, loneliness, harshness and alienation of compound life and conventional mining.*[70]

---

[67] D. Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals*, p.p.189-190.

[68] For a succinct summary of the placement system and its inadequacies see A. Kuper, *Wives for Cattle*, p.p.53-55.

[69] See J. Guy and M. Thabane, 'Technology, Ethnicity and Ideology: Basotho Miners and Shaft-Sinking on the South African Gold Mines', *JSAS, Vol 14, No 2,* 1988.

[70] Ibid, p.269.

Guy and Thabane's point that this form of masculine bonding represented an attempt to overcome the extreme difficulties of mine work is probably right. It is also interesting that different work roles could serve the same purpose of accentuating youth, strength and endurance. As different segments of the workforce were divided into assumed ethnic categories, each associated with different jobs, different masculine, ethnicised hierarchies developed around which men identified themselves.[71] However, the values mentioned in the above comment suggest that the values attached to male socialisation processes in rural areas were transposed to the mining context as migrant labour developed. Nineteenth century commentators on Sotho customs and culture, such as Casalis and Ellenberger, make several references to the importance of male initiation in shaping the personality and moral outlook of young men, values moreover which mirror those of the later period with which Guy and Thabane are concerned.[72]

The initiation process itself involved weapons training, exposure to extremes of heat and cold, and the submergence of the individual within the collective. During initiation, young men would also frequently travel long distances, a practice which still occurs today in some areas. '(L)ike herdboys and migrants, initiates are taught travelling as a discipline and are "forced to march long distances at a time throughout their country, to familiarize them with its topography" '.[73] This forced travelling forms part of a socialisation process whereby young Sotho men forge an appreciation of, and identify with, Sotho culture.[74] It is perhaps not surprising, then, that many of the heavily masculine values of these socialisation processes seem to have been transposed onto the migrant labour mining context, albeit in a reformulated manner.[75] This is not to suggest that initiation processes, and Sotho culture itself, were unchanging essences. Initiation procedures changed considerably throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as did their popularity.[76] *Ma-Rashea* members often avoided initiation altogether. However many of the masculine values inherent in rural Sotho communities seem to have survived, if in a somewhat reformulated manner. This reinforces the theory that Sotho - as with other - ethnic identities were explicitly gendered. Male ethnic constructs have

---

[71] See for example, D. Moodie, *Going for Gold: Men, Mines and Migration*, London, 1994, and P. Harries, *Work, Culture and Identity*, London, 1994.

[72] See E. Casalis, *The Basutos*, p.p. 261-267, and D. Ellenberger, *History of the Basuto Ancient and Modern*, London, 1912, p.p. 280-287.

[73] D. Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals*, p.107, quoting L Machobane, *Governernment and Change in Lesotho, 1800-1966*, Maseru, 1990.

[74] Ibid. The importance of wide-ranging travelling in male socialisation processes, especially in forging a wider cultural identity, was also argued to be a significant factor in 1960s rural Xhosa communities. See for example P. and I. Mayer, 'Socialisation by Peers' in P. Mayer (ed), *Socialisation: The Approach from Social Anthropology*, Tavistock, 1972, esp. p.p.178-181.

[75] This is also suggested by Coplan, who backs up the theory with considerable empirical evidence. See p. 116 and chapter 5, ibid.

[76] See above and H. Ashton, *The Basuto*, p.p.55-56 for a periodisation.

remained situated within the political sphere throughout all the reformulations of identity mentioned above.

Indeed Sotho socialisation processes, which contribute heavily to Sotho ethnicised identities, have reinforced patriarchal discourses throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Ellenberger argues that early nineteenth century initiation instructors could often be extremely misogynistic: '(A)mong the instructors of these lads there were bad ones who taught them to despise all women, even their own mothers'.[77] Although this observation might be partially due to missionary prejudice, and their above mentioned opposition to initiation practices in general, there seems little doubt that many rural Sotho men remained rooted in patriarchal values throughout the twentieth century, and these values may well have contributed to domestic violence. The continuation of reformulated patriarchal discourses within political parties pursuing Basutoland's independence contributed heavily to the particular direction women's' political views, values and voting patterns took in the lead up to independence in 1966. The rigidification of women within categories of either 'conservatism' or 'wantonness', itself partially a result of British colonial interference, entrenched itself within the various political parties which evolved in the first half of the twentieth century. Josiel Lefela, president of Lekhotla la Bafo, made several references to 'wanton' Sotho women and their supposed threat to 'traditional' forms of Sotho culture and custom. For example, in an article written in 1920, he refers to supposed missionary influence in facilitating prostitution among black women, and the subsequent threat to his concept of what it was to be 'Sotho'.[78]

Lefela situated this argument within a conspiracy theory aimed at reducing the black population, through prostitution and the encouragement of so-called 'half-castes': 'The Government would give these half-castes the same rights as Europeans and these rights would make the half-castes despise the blacks though they themselves were born of our own daughters'.[79] Indeed, both the Basutoland Progressive Association and Lekhotla la Bafo reacted against colonial prejudice and interference with what Epprecht has described as 'aggressive machismo', leaving little room for involvement with women's concerns.[80]

The radical critique of colonial rule presented by Lekhotla la Bafo was taken up by the newly formed Basutoland African Congress (later to become the Basutoland Congress Party or BCP) in the late 1950s. The BCP Women's League actively participated in many of the BCP's protests against colonial rule during the 1960s, making unique contributions with their singing,

---

[77] D. Ellenberger, *History of the Basuto*, p.283.

[78] J. Lefela, 'How Shall we do Away with the Black Race?', *Naledi*, 3 September 1920, cited in R. Edgar, *Prophets with Honour*, p.p.68-69.

[79] Ibid, p.69. It is interesting to note throughout this article that Lefela seems to see women's primary role as reproducers of the 'black race'. In other words he is perpetuating a 'Mothers of the Nation' ideology.

[80] M. Epprecht, 'Women's "Conservatism" ', p.44.

speeches and praise poems. They were also not averse to adopting violent and provocative behaviour, such as brandishing a knobkerry, a traditional male weapon and the symbol of the party.[81] However the BCP leadership, despite its radical image, refused to promote women's right to vote, and took little interest in specific women's concerns. This was in direct contrast to the, in many ways, more conservative Basutoland National Party (BNP) and Marema-Tlou Freedom Party who explicitly supported women's suffrage (either as a genuine conviction, or out of political astuteness). Furthermore the BNP's leader, Chief Leaboa Jonathan, specifically praised the development work of catholic nuns and lay women, referring to the latter as 'bulldozers with breasts'.[82] Catholic nuns had done much in terms of gaining a circumscribed independence for Sotho women from the patriarchal marriage customs of rural Sotho society (despite promoting Christian values of domesticity), and their small scale development work also contributed to this. Migrant workers, and the BCP, feared this development work threatened patriarchal dominance, particularly at a time when migrant labour wages were extremely low. This led to many women voting for the BNP, and contributed to the myth that they were inherently conservative. In fact, some women did still vote for the BCP, who might have won the 1965 election if they had paid more attention to women's concerns. As it was, the BNP led Lesotho into independence in 1966, against most commentators' expectations.

6.3 Sotho Identities Outside of Lesotho's Borders: Apartheid Social Engineering, the Qwaqwa 'Homeland' and Rural Slums

The so-called South Sotho 'Homeland' of Qwaqwa was created in 1969 by the Nationalist party, and developed out of the small 'native reserve' of Witsieshoek. The self -government of Qwaqwa was drawn from previously conflicting Bakwena and Batlokwa chiefs, whose people lived in the Witsiehoek area, and who accepted joint governing status due to political pressure from the state. In accordance with the Nationalist party's aims of 'separate development', plans were evolved in order to draw the so-called surplus 'South Sotho' people from the 'white' towns and cities in the Orange Free State and re-locate them in Qwaqwa or in what was to become the huge rural slum of Onverwacht/Botshabelo, adjacent to the Thaba Nchu district of Bophuthatswana. Qwaqwa and Onverwacht/Botshabelo's development was closely interlinked through the Nationalist party's policy of 'separate development' and later what

---

[81] Ibid. This is an interesting inversion of masculine symbolism which may have been in order to demonstrate a circumscribed female independence within the nrmally male domain of violent political protest. As examined in chapter 7, these re-appropriations and inversions of symbols by women seem to occur at times of particular political, economic and social upheaval, and manifest themselves particularly with respect to violence and sexual behaviour, two areas in which men have historically attempted to maintain dominance.

[82] Ibid, p.52. This comment was taken as a compliment.

Murray has termed 'displaced urbanisation'.[83] This latter term refers to the policy of diverting African urbanisation through the development of massive rural slums, which nevertheless remained within commuting distance of 'white' urban areas providing the economy with a cheap labour supply. The formation of Qwaqwa and Onverwacht/Botshabelo resulted in mass 'forced removals', resulting in extreme poverty, squalor and misery. This was fertile ground for ethnic entrepreneurs, who could play upon people's uncertainties and misery in order to bolster their own personal power base through politicising ethnicity. It was vastly exacerbated by the fact that many black rural farm workers were also relocated to either Qwaqwa or Thaba Nchu, due to the process of 'forced removals' or wider structural changes in the agricultural economy, such as the increased mechanisation of 'white' capitalist agriculture, which made many black labourers redundant.

In the late 1960s Qwaqwa was intended to become the 'Homeland' of South Sotho speakers, whilst Thaba Nchu services were to remain under the control of the Bophuthatswana government, and become a place of residence for people categorised as Tswana. However, Thaba Nchu also housed a considerable Sotho population, as well as some Xhosa people. Ethnic conflict sharpened, as the leader of the Bophuthatswana government, Lucas Mangope, sought to favour the Tswana population in an area of desperately scarce resources. The Bophuthatswana government pursued a policy of intense repression against Sotho people, especially through the use of their police force. Many abuses were perpetrated, including the rape of Sotho women by members of the said police.[84] T.K. Mopeli, who became leader of the Qwaqwa government in 1975, was able to make much political capital out of taking up the cause of the Sotho population in Thaba Nchu. Eventually the Bophuthatswana government set aside some land for the growing Sotho population, which was to become the desperately impoverished rural slum of Onverwacht/Botshabelo in 1980. It was intended by both the Nationalist party and the government of Qwaqwa that this rural slum was to become part of Qwaqwa, but it never did due to the crumbling of apartheid.

Qwaqwa itself exhibited similar problems to Onverwacht/Botshabelo, due to the same problems of overcrowding, poverty and lack of industrial development. This also provoked ethnicised conflict. Banks comments that the extreme poverty and consequent growth in crime contributed directly to the re-appropriation of clan identities as ethnic markers within

---

[83] See C. Murray, *Black Mountain*, chapter 6, and C. Murray, 'Displaced Urbanisation: South Africa's Rural Slums', *African Affairs*, Vol 86, 1987. For a compact analysis of 'displaced urbanisation' in other areas of South Africa, see W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa*, London, 1994, p.p. 197-203.

[84] C. Murray, *Black Mountain*, p.p.221-222. Rape in this context can reflect the close intertwining of masculine and politically tribalist identities, for women often represent the boundaries of ethnicised identities. For an in-depth examination of this form of ethnicised abuse, and how it is deliberately used in order to portray the dominance of one ethnic group over another, see the following: A. Ahmed, ' "Ethnic Cleansing": A Metaphor for Our Time?', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol 18, No 1, 1995, and S. Sofos, 'Inter-Ethnic Violence and Gendered Constructions of Ethnicity in Former Yugoslavia', *Social Identities*, Vol 2, No 1, 1996. Also see chapters 7 and 8 for related issues. This form of ethnicised conflict corresponds with the fourth periodisation of ethnic identities outlined in chapter 3.

many villages.[85] Social cleavages mainly centred around *matswantle* (outsiders) and *matswalla* (insiders):

> *In villages overrun or encircled by newcomers these labels became highly politicised in the daily struggle for water, wood, food and jobs. The endless influx of farm people angered the original inhabitants, who suddenly found their fields transformed into closer settlement villages. To compound matters, they found that with mass relocation virtually all their livestock was stolen.*[86]

Ethnicised stereotypes abounded. *Matswalla* often referred to *matswantle* as 'backward' and 'unsophisticated'. *Matswantle* argued that *matswalla* had preferential access to resources as they belonged to the Bakwena clan, unlike the *matswantle* who originated largely from Makgolokwe or Batlokwa clans.[87] This sub-ethnic discourse of clan also utilised custom and tradition in order to demonstrate who were the 'true Sotho', thus ethnicising conflict. For example, *matswantle* argued that *matswalla* were not 'true Sotho' as the Bakwena clan chiefs had largely given up circumcision rituals in the early part of the century, due largely to missionary influence, whilst the Batlokwa continued to practice the rite. Thus *matswalla* chiefs had no right to rule as they were uncircumcised. *Matswantle* also referred derogatively to *matswalla* chiefs and headmen as *induna*, thus placing them in the same category as the notorious 'boss-boys' on the mines.[88] These ethnicised rivalries had their origins in earlier hostilities to farm people in the 1950s, which also equated with rivalries between clans and chiefdoms.[89]

T.K. Mopeli attempted to overcome these divisions by deliberately fostering ethnic nationalism.[90] The attempt to curry the favour of the Sotho population in Thaba Nchu represented part of this project. This ultimately failed due to the strength of the above-mentioned local ethnicised divides, and the inability of Mopeli to construct a convincing discourse of Sotho nationalism for Qwaqwa, due to the fact that many of the symbols

---

[85] L. Banks, 'The Failure of Ethnic Nationalism: Land, Power and the Politics of Clanship on the South African Highveld, 1860-1990', *Africa*, Vol 65, No 4, 1995, p.578.

[86] Ibid.

[87] This reflects the earlier regional divisions between urban *Ma-Rashea* gangs.

[88] Ibid, p.p.578-579. Although not exclusively an urban/rural ethnicised divide, these ethnic stereotypes are remarkably similar to those in other areas during the 1960s and 1970s, outlined in chapters 3 and 8.

[89] The full history of Witsiehoek, its subsequent metamorphosis into Qwaqwa, and the rivalries between chiefdoms, clans and others which accompanied these developments, are too complex to reproduce here. For a useful summary see L. Banks, 'The Failure of Ethnic Nationalism'. Also see the magisterial study by C. Murray, *Black Mountain*, which explores these issues in a broader context, as well as vividly illustrating the full extent of the misery of apartheid, 'Separate Development' and 'displaced urbanisation'.

[90] This corresponds with the third periodisation of ethnic identity construction outlined in chapter 3.

representative of Sotho identity had already been appropriated by the elites ruling in Lesotho itself. Ultimately, Mopeli had to return to a narrow politically tribalist base for support, and eventually, in 1992, the Batlokwa and Bakwena chiefs resigned from the Qwaqwa cabinet to join the ANC aligned Congress of Traditional Leaders.

The failure of Mopeli's attempts at fostering ethnic nationalism from 'above' illustrate the need for these forms of ethnicised discourses to resonate with people's concrete experiences in order for them to gain an ideological grip on popular consciousness. Ethnicised discourses arising from 'below', based on clan identities, were able to take a firm hold on people's imaginations as they resonated with their past experiences and could provide a form of circumscribed security and identity in a time of extreme poverty, neglect and violence. The importance of the institution of the chieftaincy is also readily apparent. There is also one important contrast between Qwaqwa and Lesotho. Some of Lesotho's rural populace, despite the appalling poverty there, still had access to some land, whereas this was patently not the case for most in Qwaqwa. Therefore state appeals to Sotho ethnic nationalism in the latter case were far less likely to work, as people tended to identify on a local, ethnicised level with the chieftaincy, and the importance of the chieftaincy was in turn tied to ensuring access to land. This was far less likely to be the case in Qwaqwa than in Lesotho.

6.4 Independence, the End of Apartheid and an Uncertain Future: Post-1966 Lesotho and the Changing Nature of Sotho Identities.

The transition from colonial rule to full democratic independence has followed an extremely uneven path in Lesotho. Chief Leaboa Jonathan became the first prime minister of newly independent Lesotho in 1966, due to the winning of the 1965 elections by the Basutoland National Party (henceforth BNP). Tension soon arose between him and King Moshoeshoe II. The king had the support of the Marema Tlou Freedom Party, and felt that the newly forged constitution deprived him of his rightful powers. The 1970 elections were won by the Basutoland Congress Party (henceforth BCP), but were prevented from gaining power by Jonathan, who staged a coup. Moshoeshoe II was exiled to Holland. Several attempts were made to remove Jonathan from power, all of which failed. Jonathan gravitated to a pro-ANC stance and stepped up his criticism of apartheid, for example refusing to recognise Transkeian 'independence' in 1976. However, he continued a policy of ruthless repression of resistance to his rule at home. The apartheid regime responded to his pro-ANC stance by supporting the Lesotho Liberation Army, made up of some of Jonathan's exiled opponents, and in 1986 struck a decisive blow to his rule by closing South Africa's borders with Lesotho, thus cutting the country off from many essential supplies. This triggered a military coup, and Lesotho remained under military control for seven years until the elections of 1993 which brought the

BCP to power in an uneasy co-habitation with the police, military and monarchy. Moshoeshoe II was re-instated soon after. Economically, Lesotho remained heavily dependent on South Africa, migrant labour remaining an essential financial source. The end of apartheid has not ended the severe economic problems faced by Lesotho, especially as the ANC is concentrating on dealing with the massive unemployment problems within South Africa itself, thus reducing the likelihood of financial help foe the ailing Lesotho economy.[91]

Post-independence Lesotho governments invariably attempted to appropriate Sotho identity in order to fashion a rigidified national identity from 'above', which did not resonate with the fluid, processual identities of many of the rural populace. The weakening of the monarchy and the chieftainship by British imposed reforms during the period of colonial rule had, as outlined above, led to the formation of 'new political movements as alternative means of reasserting national objectives'.[92] The historical avoidance of assimilation within South Africa and the later gaining of independence led to a huge growth in the civil service, and other relatively elite groups, from the 1960s onwards. The fact that Lesotho was surrounded by South Africa, and virtually reliant on migrant labour remittances economically during the apartheid era, ensured this growth, especially as international condemnation of apartheid gathered pace. Leaboa Jonathan's condemnation of apartheid, which became stronger after Mozambique and Angola gained independence in 1974, and the events of Soweto in 1976 heralded change in South Africa, also ran in tandem with continued - seemingly paradoxical - attempts at encouraging investment in Lesotho by South African business. The result of these factors led to a growth of a civil service elite which had vested interests in pursuing a particular form of Sotho nationalism.[93]

Other elite groupings, such as the military and police leadership, politicians, chiefs and various entrepreneurs also had vested interests in promoting an elite form of culturally brokered nationalism for similar reasons. Therefore national symbols were deliberately created and promoted in various ways, such as Moshoeshoe Day (originally created by Sotho chiefs in 1919), and more banal examples such as commemorations of famous battles on postage stamps, the national flag and anthem, and independence holiday. During the later 1970s, the formation of links with such countries as Mozambique and Cuba also demonstrated politically independent nation-state status from South Africa. The pursuit of a national purpose by these elite groups also encompassed such criteria as improved communications links and the

---

[91] This is necessarily a brief summary of the political and economic history of Lesotho since independence. For more detailed accounts see for example the following: J. Bardill and J. Cobbe, *Lesotho: Dilemmas of Dependence in Southern Africa*, London, 1985; J. Omer-Cooper, *History of Southern Africa*, p.p. 260-263; R. Weisfelder, 'The Basotho Nation-State'; R. Weisfelder, 'Lesotho and the Inner Periphery in the New South Africa', *JMAS, Vol 30, No 4*, 1992; R. Love, 'Lesotho: Inner to Outer Periphery?'; R. Southall, *Democratising Dependence? The Lesotho General Elections of 1993*, Pretoria, 1993; T. Quinlan, 'Marena A Lesotho'.

[92] R. Weisfelder, 'The Basuto Nation-State', p.224.

[93] Ibid, p.226.

formation of a national army. Images of modernity assumed great importance in this politically elite project. As Weisfelder comments, construction cranes and other images of modern technology and commercial activity 'assume unusual significance in a country totally devoid of an integrated economy at the time of independence'.[94] In the Janus-like fashion of nationalist ideologues Leaboa Jonathan pursued this route to modernity whilst stressing the importance of traditions, custom and culture rooted in the chieftainship, family and church.[95]

In some respects this form of elite, culturally brokered nationalism parallels forms of ethnic nationalism such as that espoused by Mangosuthu Buthelezi. However, it also embraces facets of civic nationalism and thus eludes these forms of rigid theoretical categorisations.[96] This is at least part due to the fact that Lesotho has been largely ethnically homogenous since its formation as a nation-state in the nineteenth century.[97] It has a tradition of resistance to assimilation within South Africa's borders, promoting nationalist identifications, whilst its virtually ethnically homogenous population entails little in terms of ethnic conflict within state borders (although this does not preclude sub-ethnic conflicts between chiefdoms, which could be ethnicised outside of the state, as illustrated above). This elite form of nationalism does not articulate well with the majority of the population however. Many ordinary rural Sotho people still experienced their identities primarily through the institution of the chieftaincy. As already demonstrated, this did not preclude criticisms of individual chiefs. Indeed, there was an historical tradition of criticism dating back to the early nineteenth century. However, the institution itself remained important. This is not to suggest that the chieftainship was the only element of rural Sotho identity in the era of independence. Religious, gender and class affiliations did exist. However it still remains an important, if gradually eroding, element of popular Sotho consciousness. Additionally, political independence itself could do little to change a population 'whose existence, and national identity was based on the bonds between chief and subject, and on links between rural home and urban South Africa, rather than on any substantive affinity with the state'.[98]

The importance of migrant labour in determining many rural Sothos' continuing identifications with Lesotho also cannot be underestimated. Urbanised Sotho living in South Africa still identified with facets of Sotho identity in the 1960s. For example in Cape Town many still

---

[94] Ibid, p.225.

[95] Ibid, p.227.

[96] See chapters 3and 9 for descriptions of what these forms of nationalism entail.

[97] This does not mean that Sotho people were not influenced by the small pockets of 'Nguni' and other peoples who sought protection under Moshoeshoe in the early nineteenth century. See A.M. Duggan-Cronin, *The Bantu Tribes of Southern Africa, Vol 2 Section 3*, which illustrates several 'Nguni' influences upon Sotho culture. Especially see plate LXII, which demonstrates 'Nguni' influnce on Sotho hut construction. This photographic plate also illustrates that pre-colonial forms of dress survived into the 1930s, although very rare by then. In Herschel district Nguni and Sotho communities lived next to each other, and therefore cultural influences between the two were widespread.

[98] T. Quinlan, 'Marena A Lesotho', p.212.

celebrated Moshoeshoe Day.[99] However, at least in Cape Town, rural/urban divides were becoming stronger bases for identity and differentiation than ethnic ones, although these divides could also become ethnicised.[100] Migrant labourers, however, had a vested interest in keeping a rural base in Lesotho, especially in the era of apartheid when it was difficult to gain a living base in South Africa. Indeed, migrant labour fundamentally shaped rural village life and marital relations in Lesotho in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Extramarital relations provided one of the routes by which migrant labourers' earnings could be diffused within rural communities.[101] Long-term extra-marital relationships, referred to as *bonyatsi*, also developed between migrant workers and women who were often the married partners of absent migrant workers themselves. Spiegel comments that many Sotho sought to justify these relationships in terms of older customs such as forms of polygyny. In other words they sought to regain a moral and social order within a fast-changing social and economic climate through calling upon past custom in order to explain the changes occurring in the present. The fact that monogamous marriages often broke down due to long periods of male absence and lack of financial support were generally not commented on. People sought to make sense of the present through the cultural building blocks of the past.[102]

Migrant labour has also recently led to an increased circumscribed independence for women (although this occurred to a lesser extent in the first half of the twentieth century - see above). The mass retrenchments of Sotho mine workers in the aftermath of the 1987 strike, the numbers of which increased still further in the 1990s, has led to many women trying their luck in South Africa in terms of employment and a new life. According to Coplan this has led to a new phenomenon in Lesotho - the male-headed, single-parent rural household - due to the fact that many women married to unemployed men left their homes ostensibly to find employment to support their families, but often never returning.[103] Indeed, Coplan's research suggests that women have gradually gained more independence through both migrating to South Africa, and the urban areas of Lesotho itself.[104] This has resulted in a fundamental challenge to the patriarchal system which, in a reformulated manner, has remained central to Sotho ethnicised identities throughout the twentieth century. Women's self-help networks and

---

[99] M. Wilson and A. Mafeje, *Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township*, London, 1963, p.p.35-36.

[100] Ibid, p.140. See chapter 8 for similar examples in 1960s Durban.

[101] See A. Spiegel, 'Rural Differentiation and the Diffusion of Migrant Labour Remittances in Lesotho', in P. Mayer (ed), *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society: Anthropological Perspectives on Labour Migration in South Africa*, Cape Town, 1980.

[102] See A. Spiegel, 'Polygyny as Myth: Towards Understanding Extramarital Relations in Lesotho', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa*, Witwatersrand, 1991.

[103] D. Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals*, p.174.

[104] However, this is a highly complex issue, involving the particular way that marriages and 'bridewealth' has evolved under the migrant labour system. See C. Murray, *Families Divided*, Chapter 6 for an in-depth analysis of the changing meaning of marriages resulting from migrant labour, and the effect these have had on the 'bridewealth' process.

the growth of part-time and informal sector jobs in Lesotho's rural areas, has also allowed women to pursue an increasingly independent life-style.[105]

It would seem that, in the aftermath of the crumbling of apartheid, Sotho identity is set to change even further. International development agencies, which helped prop up the fragile economy during the era of apartheid, are now increasingly turning their attention to South Africa, driven by Western budgetary cuts and the more global political and economic significance of the latter.[106] Migrant labour, a fundamental shaping factor of Sotho identity from the late nineteenth century onwards, is now in decline and this casts doubt on the viability of Lesotho as a nation-state. The bureaucratic, military and political elites still have vested self-interests in propagating Sotho nationalism, and some are actively pursuing policies of irredentism, laying claim to land lost to the Orange Free State in the nineteenth century.[107] However, it is unlikely that these claims will produce results as the ANC has many land restoration claims with which to deal within South Africa's own borders. Coplan found that many migrant workers whom he interviewed just prior to the 1994 elections in South Africa, would willingly relinquish their Lesotho passports if a government 'good for blacks' came to power.[108] At the time of writing, Lesotho's future as a nation-state is in an uncertain, liminal phase. It is unlikely that the new ANC government, which is attempting to woo investment, would want to incorporate Lesotho, with its impoverished economy, within its own borders. However, the majority of the rural population do not seem to identify with the elite constructed nationalist identity propagated by Sotho politicians. Their own, ethnicised, identities seem to centre round the chieftainship, the future of which itself is in doubt due to the fact that chiefs have increasing difficulty in allocating land. This does not necessarily mean that Sotho ethnic identities will die out however. As illustrated above, these identities can transcend state borders and can take on 'a life of their own' without the buttress of the institution of the chieftaincy. Ethnicity is very malleable, and would seem capable of surviving the decay of Lesotho as a nation-state. Unfortunately, the poverty inherent in Lesotho could mean that Sotho identity could be manipulated towards violent ends. The potential for political tribalism remains, as the so-called 'race riots' of May 1991, in which Taiwanese and Korean shopkeepers were targeted by the Sotho urban underclass, demonstrates. As Coplan comments, '(h)owever little, or perhaps because there is so little that the nation state does for them, Lesotho's new underclass expressed revolt in nationalist terms'.[109] As with many desperately poor people, reified, ethnicised, identities (even if the actual elites who created

---

105 D. Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals*, chapter 6. For a similar example in 1980s Qwaqwa, and the subsequent violent response of the male underclass, see L. Bank, 'Angry Men and Working Women: Gender, Violence and Economic Change in Qwaqwa in the 1980s', *African Studies*, Vol 53, No 1, 1994.

106 See R. Love, 'Lesotho: Inner to Outer Periphery?', p.77.

107 See R. Weisfelder, 'Lesotho and the Inner Periphery', *passim*.

108 D. Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals*, p.250.

109 Ibid, p.253.

them are despised) are the only secure anchors upon which many Sotho people can cling in a time of great uncertainty.

7. 'MOTHERS OF THE NATION', AND THE 'THREAT' OF THE 'LOOSE' WOMAN: CONNECTIONS BETWEEN GENDER, MOTHERHOOD, SEXUALITY AND ETHNICISED IDENTITIES IN TWENTIETH CENTURY SOUTH AFRICA

One of the most pervasive aspects of twentieth century ethnic and nationalist mobilisation is the specific role conferred on women. Concepts of motherhood, 'passivity' and 'honour' are often utilised in constructing women's positions in the culturally brokered versions of ethnic and nationalist narratives.[1] Reified constructions of motherhood are deployed by male culture brokers in order to locate the position of women within a nation or ethnicised grouping. This is usually achieved by attempting to assign women a well-defined but circumscribed position in society, to which some status, honour and respectability are attached.

In South Africa these ideological constructions of identity arose at specific historical junctures, especially at times of rapid socio-economic change resulting in considerable social dislocation. Older, rural, forms of identity were fundamentally altered due to colonial and capitalist penetration, and particularly the longevity of the migrant labour process. However, the very length of this process also provided the crucial space necessary for people to reformulate their identities, something which may not have occured in a situation of more rapid proletarianisation. This is not to suggest that proletarianisation was not rapid, but rather that the migrant labour process allowed for a reformulation of rural identities. This chapter sets out to explore how these factors in South Africa's history, together with the impact of segregationist and later apartheid policies, resulted in male nationalist and ethnic culture brokers, both African and Afrikaner, constructing more explicitly defined subservient roles for women within the ethnic or nationalist group. Reformulated roles, moreover, which often centred around particular conceptions of motherhood which often appealed to some women.

However, these ideologies were not just passively accepted by women. Motherhood could include various meanings over the course of the twentieth century, depending upon the changing economic and social circumstances of the women involved. Cultural elements and attendant socialisation processes within particular communities also contributed to a myriad of conceptualisations of motherhood and women's particular roles in society, and women could re-work these identities to their own advantage. Furthermore, 'motherhood' itself was, and is,

---

[1] See especially the insightful introduction to F. Anthias and N. Yuval-Davis (eds), *Woman-Nation-State*, Macmillan, London, 1989. For the South African context see D. Gaitskell and E. Unterhalter, 'Mothers of the Nation: A Comparative Analysis of Nation, Race and Motherhood in Afrikaner Nationalism and the African National Congress' in the same volume. Also C. Walker (ed), *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*, London, 1990. For a comparison with late eighteenth century Britain, see L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, Pimlico, 1992, especially chapter 6. For an interesting exploration of the intertwining of eugenics and constructions of motherhood in early twentieth century South Africa see S. Klausen, ' "For the Sake of Race": Eugenic Discourses of Feeblemindedness and Motherhood in the South African Historical Record, 1903-1926', *JSAS*, Vol 23, No 1, 1997.

more than just a political construction. This chapter aims to explore these issues, as well as some attendant and connected changes in sexuality and identity during the century.

7.1 Idealised Motherhood, Female Independence and Ethnic Identities in Pre-1948 South Africa

It is now generally accepted within revisionist schools of historiography that the migrant labour process allowed older forms of identities the crucial space to reformulate themselves in order at least partially to withstand the impact of colonial domination and uneven capitalist penetration. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, Africans often mobilised around their chiefs in order to resist colonial land expropriation and complete incorporation into the capitalist economy. These mobilised identities were often translated in an ethnicised sense.[2] The fact that pre-colonial communities and their attendant moral values were not completely destroyed also entailed a reformulation of gender relations and identities, with a considerable overlap between pre-capitalist and capitalist values.

Pre-colonial southern African identities were fundamentally divided in terms of gender and age. It has even been argued that the division between men on the one hand, and women and children/young people on the other, represented the major class cleavage in pre-colonial southern African societies.[3] However, this argument seems too reductionist, in that it assumes precolonial southern African societies can be perceived primarily in class terms. It also raises issues with regard to the subjective consciousnesses of the historical actors concerned. For these gendered identities may well have been perceived in a different way by these communities than in class terms. Gender divisions were also fundamentally premised upon the *lobola* system.[4] Pre-colonial southern African communities exhibited several forms of what could be perceived as patriarchal social control of women and young people. Themes of control, restraint and respect were central to their moral universes, and economic functioning. Young men and women were socialised and socially controlled through age-set groupings.[5] Married women, especially when young, were tied to strict rules of etiquette, such as the

---

[2] See especially chapter 3.

[3] J. Guy, 'Analysing Pre-Capitalist Societies in Southern Africa', *JSAS*, Vol 14, No 1, 1987.

[4] The structure and value systems of pre-colonial southern African societies is too vast a subject to receive academic justice in one chapter. See Guy (footnote 3) for an interesting overview, which nevertheless should be read with caution due to its reductionist materialist approach. Also A. Kuper, *Wives for Cattle*, London, 1982, which analyses *lobola* systems in various rural African societies over time. Kuper should also be read with caution, due to his somewhat ahistorical approach, but he does provide a useful synthesis of earlier anthropological works concerned with the subject. This particular chapter section aims to analyse rural and urban communities in the first half of the twentieth century, and how these relate to ethnic and gender identities. However, there will be comparisons drawn with facets of pre-colonial communities in order to demonstrate how socialisation processes, and attendant identity formations, have been reformulated through such criteria as the migrant labour process.

[5] See chapters 7and 8 for a more detailed analysis of these socialisation processes.

hlonipha system.[6] Guy comments that the appropriation and control of women's productive and reproductive capacity by men was the axis on which these societies turned, although this argument does not properly take into account how these socialisation processes were interpreted by the people involved. Women were responsible both for homestead agricultural production and the reproduction of labour power. Marriage provided the prime institution whereby the male transfer of rights over women and their potential children was carried out, and this was legitimated through the social practice of bridewealth, or *lobola.*[7]

The gradual, uneven, but inexorable expansion of the migrant labour process was fundamentally to alter the basis of pre-colonial South African societies. Although initially chiefdoms were able to control the terms by which migrant labourers entered the workforce the discovery of diamonds, and especially gold, in the late nineteenth century, together with rinderpest and East Coast fever epidemics, and the implementation of colonial taxation, ensured the gradual accumulation of colonial control.[8] The predominance of young African men in the migrant labour force, especially in the first two decades of the twentieth century, was partially due both to male dominated colonial ideologies and the survival of African forms of rural patriarchy. Most women were thus entrenched in the countryside, working the land.[9]

However, the ideologies espoused by colonial administrators and mineowners, together with rural African patriarchal structures requiring the retention of women to work the land, do not in themselves completely explain why African women remained in rural areas longer than men. African women often vigorously defended rural patterns of life,[10] and this strongly suggests a circumscribed status and prestige felt by women in rural areas during this time. Furthermore, this was often played upon by ethnic culture brokers in order to promote their own political agendas in the first half of the twentieth century (and indeed in the era of apartheid and beyond).

Nevertheless, expanding cash needs and the start of a decline in rural production (although this did not present severe problems until the 1930s), due to the expansion of the migrant labour workforce and legislation which adversely affected the production capabilities of the South African reserves, meant older men began to become absorbed into the migrant labour workforce, and women were increasingly leaving their rural homes as well. This was in spite

---

[6] Ibid. This section of the chapter draws heavily upon Guy's above mentioned article, which provides a useful overview of these examples of pre-colonial social controls.

[7] This is the essence of Guy's argument. He argues that 'labour power' was the fundamental driving force of these pre-colonial communities, and that the control of women's productive and reproductive capacities was the fundamental pivot around which labour power copuld be accumulated. This argument will be returned to later, when early twentieth century southern African communities will be analysed in a comparative fashion.

[8] For a useful overview of this process, see W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa*, Oxford, 1994, especially p.p.25-34.

[9] See B. Bozzoli, 'Marxism, Feminism and South African Studies', *JSAS*, Vol 9, No 2, 1983, p.158.

[10] See for example W. Beinart, 'Amafelandawonye (the Die-Hards): Popular Protest and Women's Movements in Herschel District in the 1920s', in W. Beinart and C. Bundy (eds), *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa*, London, 1987.

of legislation aimed at reducing the flow of African women to urban areas in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Legislation, moreover, which had the support of diverse interest groups such as the colonial administration, and African chiefs and migrant labourers, all of whom had a vested interest in keeping women in the rural areas in order to perpetuate the rural subsistence economy (an economy coming under increasing pressure as the demands of migrant labour required men to remain absent from home for increasingly long periods as the twentieth century progressed).[11]

The fact that women were leaving rural areas in increasing numbers from the beginning of the twentieth century was also becoming a matter of major concern for ethnic and nationalist culture brokers of the time. Most of their fears centred around the supposed disintegration of the rural economy, and of selective traditionalist values.[12] Additionally, there was a fundamental fear of loss of control over women, and it was within this context that more explicit ideologies concerning the position of women in society - 'Mothers of the Nation' ideologies - began to be constructed. Furthermore, these ideologies were fundamentally linked with the debates inherent in moral ethnicities.

In an address to a teachers' conference at Amanzoti, Natal, in 1920 D.D.T. Jabavu, who promoted facets of both ethnic and nationalist identities, centred a substantial part of his speech around the position of young African women in town. He situated his talk around a specific article by a Ms Hertslet, printed in the June 1920 edition of the *South African Quarterly*. Hertslet's article is quoted in Jabavu's talk as follows:

> *The plight of Native women in Johannesburg is a burning question which affects everyone of us and the Bantu races in that the demoralising influences of the towns are threatening to spoil a large number of their Native women, who in their turn will harmfully influence their country cousins. Would that the Bantu might realise the evil for themselves, and stem the tide that sets townwards! Before they have gone but a short distance in their upward march towards a virile national life, the very foundations of their strength are threatened by the danger to their women.*[13]

---

[11] For a useful summary of African women's changing positions within the migrant labour system during the first half of the twentieth century, and the legislation enacted in order to prevent women becoming urbanized, see C. Walker, 'Gender and the Development of the Migrant Labour System c. 1850-1930: An Overview', in C. Walker (ed), *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*.

[12] See chapter 5 for an overview of 'selective traditionalism', which emanated from both elite ethnic culture brokers, and 'ordinary' Africans intent on preserving facets of pre-colonial life-styles.

[13] D.D.T. Jabavu, *The Black Problem*, Lovedale, 1921, p.149.

Jabavu used the quote to make clear connections between constructs of virtuous womanhood and the health of the 'nation'. These ideologies appear in the rhetoric of nationalist and ethnic discourses of both African and Afrikaner culture brokers throughout the first half of the twentieth century, and beyond.[14] However, especially in the African case, these ideologies had to build upon the more cultural, 'passive' identities which had previously existed in rural, pre-colonial communities. Therefore before providing an in-depth examination of these more politicised ethnic and nationalist identities, both moral ethnic and politically tribalist, these more 'passive' forms of identity need to be explored, in order to illustrate how these later more politicised identities resonated with peoples' prior belief systems and values.

The position of women in pre-colonial, rural African societies was always ambiguous, and this was demonstrated to be the case by anthropologists working in the first half of the twentieth century. Many pre-colonial Southern African communities, especially those which practiced exogamous marriage, perceived newly married women as a potential danger to the clan into which she married. In some 1930s rural Mpondo communities married women posed considerable problems in terms of integration within the community of the exogamous clan:

> *The real difficulty in the position of married women is that they are never fully absorbed into their husband's clan, but are always partly strangers and therefore dangerous. A woman, some months or years after her marriage, is sacrificed for and given the milk of her husband's cows. After that she ceases to drink the milk of her own clan's cattle. From the time of her marriage she may be made sick by her husband's ancestral spirits, but she never becomes a full member of his clan. A large percentage of the accusations of witch-craft are against women, but very rarely is the accused a daughter of the umzi; almost always she is a wife or a mother. When an umzi is dying out through consumption the normal diagnosis is that an ishologu (an evil spirit) has come in with one of the wives.*[15]

---

[14] For an examination of Zulu culture brokers' concern with the changing position of Zulu women in the first half of the twentieth century, and the supposed effect this had upon their conception of 'Zuluness', see S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness', in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, 1989. For an examination of similar ideologies amongst Inkatha ideologues in contemporary times, see S. Hassim, 'Family, Motherhood and Zulu Nationalism: The Politics of the Inkatha Women's Brigade', *Feminist Review*, No 43, 1993. Also chapters 8 and 9. For Afrikaner 'Mothers of the Nation' ideologies, see J. Butler, 'Afrikaner Women and the Creation of Ethnicity in a Small South African Town, 1902-1950', in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism*, and I. Hofmeyer, 'Building a Nation from Words: Afrikaans Language, Literature and Ethnic Identity, 1902-1924', in S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds), *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, Harlow, 1987. For comparisons between Afrikaner and ANC ideologies of this nature, see D. Gaitskell and E. Unterhalter, 'Mothers of the Nation: A Comparative Analysis of Nation, Race and Motherhood in Afrikaner Nationalism and the African National Congress', and A. McClintock, 'Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family', *Feminist Review*, No 44, 1993.

[15] M. Hunter, 'The Effects of contact with Europeans on the Status of Pondo Women', *Africa*, Vol 16, No 3, 1933. Also M. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact With Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, London, 1964 (first edition, 1936), p.p.43-45.

This liminal, transitional state which women inhabited was common in many rural communities of the time, and even in some rural comunities of today.[16]

Douglas makes the following conceptualisation with regard to the need for human beings to classify, categorise and impose social order upon their social universes:

> *(T)he yearning for rigidity is in us all. It is part of our human condition to long for hard lines and clear concepts. When we have them we have to either face the fact that some realities elude them, or else blind ourselves to the inadequacies of the concepts. The final paradox of the search for purity is that it is an attempt to force experience into logical categories of non-contradiction. But experience is not amenable and those who make the attempt find themselves led into contradiction.*[17]

There is an essentialist tone to this conceptualisation of human need to categorise and impose order which leads one to be cautious. However the need to overcome contradictions within the moral universes of particular human societies, and to re-impose order, does resonate with the ambiguous position of women in small scale societies:

> *(I)deas about separating, purifying, demarcating and punishing transgressions have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience. It is only by exaggerating the difference between within and without, above and below, male and female, with and against, that a semblance of order is created.*[18]

States of transition and liminality were imposed on women in many rural, exogamous, southern African communities, in order to overcome the symbolic danger of introducing someone from outside the clan, thus re-imposing order. This relates both to small scale communities, and , in a somewhat reformulated sense, to larger, ethnicised, identities, and even ethnic nationalist movements.

---

[16] The anthropological literature concerned with this issue is too large to reproduce here. For useful overviews, which nevertheless should be treated with caution due to their ahistorical approach, see M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London, 1969, and A. Kuper, *Wives for Cattle*, especially chapter 2. Also A. Liebenberg, 'Authority, Avoidances and Marriage: An Analysis of the Position of Gcaleka Women in Qwaninga, Willowvale District, Transkei', M.A. thesis, Rhodes University, 1994 and A. Berglund, *Zulu Thought Patterns and Symbolism*, London 1976.

[17] M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, p.162.

[18] Ibid, p.4.

The effect of so-called European 'culture contact' and urbanisation upon South African communities was a major area of study and concern amongst anthropologists in the 1930s, and often mirrored the moral panic of African ethnic and nationalist culture brokers regarding the position of women in changing socio-economic circumstances.[19] Much of the concern centred around the fact that young women were increasingly leaving rural areas. Urban location marital relations were argued by some anthropologists to be unstable, due to the inability of older forms of rural marital custom to adapt sufficiently to the changes wrought by the penetration of a capitalist economy and European christianised morality. Krige argues that time limitations were one significant obstacle.[20]

Her research led her to the conclusion that the need for relatives to negotiate a marriage through such customs as 'bridewealth', which were often transacted between rural and urban areas separated by considerable distances, led to many potential marriages breaking down, often after the initial bridewealth was paid. She also argued that the breakdown of parental control in urban areas, which operated through social sanctions originating from the countryside, were not compensated for by newer social sanctions such as the church, adding to such perceived problems as unmarried mothers. 'A church member who has had an illegitimate child hardly connects the penalty of attending a purification class for six months with moral obliquity, and such purification has almost become a functional constituent of, or a necessary prerequisite to, baptism of the child.'[21] She also argues that young urban black men were increasingly casting aside responsibility for their children conceived out of marriage.

> *There can be no doubt that the ease with which all responsibility for an illigitimate child can be thrown off has very bad effects on young Bantu men in the towns. Many 'boys' in domestic employment will, with encouragement, tell of four or five girls by whom they have had children and will boast of the way in which they got rid of the girl's relations and their demands.*[22]

---

[19] Some of the most interesting examples were published in the journal *Africa*, such as the following: I. Schapera, 'Pre-Marital Pregnancy and Native Opinion. A Note on Social Change', Vol 6, No 1, 1933; M. Hunter, 'The Effects of Contact With Europeans on the Status of Pondo Women'; E. Hellman, 'Native Life in a Johannesburg Slumyard', Vol 8, No 1, 1935; E. Krige, 'Changing Conditions in Marital Relations and Parental Duties among Urbanized Natives', Vol 9, No 1, 1936; G. Culwick, 'New Ways for Old in the Treatment of Adolescent African Girls', Vol 12, No 2, 1939. Also see M. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, E. Hellman, *Rooiyard: A Sociological Survey of an Urban Native Slumyard*, Manchester 1969 (First Edition, 1948), I. Schapera (ed), *The Bantu Speaking Tribes of South Africa*, London, 1937, E. Hellman, *Problems of Urban Bantu Youth*, Johannesburg, 1940.

[20] E. Krige, 'Changing Conditions in Marital Relations', p.17.

[21] Ibid, p.6. See also D. Gaitskell's insightful studies '"Wailing for Purity": Prayer Unions, African Mothers and Adolescent Daughters, 1912-1940', in S. Marks and R. Rathbone (eds), *Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa, 1870-1930*, London, 1982, and '"Christian Compounds for Girls": Church Hostels for African Women in Johannesburg 1907-1970', *JSAS*, Vol 6, No 1, 1979.

[22] Ibid, p.9.

Krige comments that this was due to the custom of either marrying an unmarried pregnant girl, or paying damages, entailing no long term financial support which was desparately needed in an urban setting.[23] There is an interesting parallel here with the rise of *indlavini* male associations in rural Pondoland during the 1930s and after. These groups were often marked by 'their tendency to fight over women and their aggressive behaviour towards women'.[24] Schapera notes similar tendencies amongst rural Kgatla young men of the same time period:

> *Sometimes they will seize upon any girl whom they fancy, and ask her to sleep with them. She is by no means always unwilling, but, if she refuses, they whip her with the canes they habitually carry and force her to comply with their wishes. Often two...will copulate in succession with the same girl; they catch her when she is out alone, and compel her to accept their advances, or bribe her with gifts of beads and wooden spoons.*[25]

However, not all anthropological research concerned with social change in the 1930s propounded the argument that older rural customs were either disappearing ossified relics, or becoming hopelessly inadequate in terms of coping with the changes in sexual and marital relationships. Hunter (later Monica Wilson) provides several examples of reformulated custom which both reflected the social changes of the time, and provided some form of social sanction.[26] (Although, unlike Krige, she was studying predominantly rural communities). There is also a presumption in the anthropological literature of the time, including the work of Hunter, that marriage was the 'correct' way to cement a relationship. It is important to question whether unmarried unions and single parenthood were simply signs of social and moral disintegration, or whether they could represent a reformulation of status for women, often allowing them more independence. Certainly the anthropological literature concerned was permeated by the moral and social values held by the authors.

The effect of partial urbanisation, and the partial breakdown of pre-colonial social controls, such as *hlonipha* avoidances, initiation ceremonies for young people, and strict adherence to *lobola* custom, caused considerable concern to ethnic culture brokers of the time, resulting in

---

[23] Ibid.

[24] W. Beinart, 'The Origins of the Indlavini: Male Associations and Migrant Labour in the Transkei', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, 1991, p. 106. For a more thorough analysis of these male associations, and their relationship with changing forms of masculinity and ethnic identity, see chapter 8.

[25] I. Schapera, 'Premarital Pregnancy and Native Opinion', p.69.

[26] M. Hunter, 'The Effect of Contact with Europeans', passim. Also see her book *Reaction to Conquest.*

moral ethnic debates also participated in by segregationist ideologues. The effects of westernised lifestyles were also becoming an area of increasing apprehension. For example, members of the Zulu Cultural Society were inveighing against the effects of European dance forms such as ballroom dancing, which were being increasingly taken up by young Zulu people in urban areas in the 1930s and 1940s. Many of these concerns centred around what was considered the appropriate behaviour of young Zulu women, again demonstrating how important the conduct and behaviour of women was in determining the boundaries of more explicit ethnicised identities.[27] However these, mostly male-dominated, debates were never free from ambiguity. D.D.T. Jabavu explicitly advocated idealised forms of Europeanised middle-class womanhood, with all the connotations of essentialist 'passivity', domesticisation and subordination this entailed, when speaking against the effects of urbanisation on young women.[28] Members of the Zulu Cultural Society were also divided regarding whether traditionalist forms of Zulu dancing should be encouraged as a true representation of Zulu ethnic identity in a modernising milieu, or whether it pandered to the racist stereotypes of whites. Respectability had become a central issue for these elite culture brokers, wishing both to preserve selective facets of traditionalism, whilst simultaneously integrating with European concepts of individualism and capitalist economy.[29]

The gradual process of urbanisation, slowed by the implementation of migrant labour and policies of segregation, was certainly leading to a plethora of different identities during the first half of the century. The inhabitants of slumyards, which were growing up around bigger conurbations such as Johannesburg and Pretoria, seem to have existed in a milieu where some forms of custom and sanction broke down, and others were reformulated. It is also interesting to note that concepts of ritual purity and inpurity were sometimes translated into a more cultural, ethnicised form. For example in 'Rooiyard', a slumyard existing in Doornfontein near the centre of Johannesburg in the 1930s, Zulu women would seclude their newly born babies for approximately one month in order to avoid 'Basotho sickness'.

> *This 'Basotho sickness', which is so greatly feared, is believed to be caused by any contact with Sotho. Adult Sotho have medicine which enters the stomach of the child and there turns into a snake. This snake eats away at the stomach of the child and causes its excreta to turn green. Even the breath of a Sotho may cause this evil result and it is also believed that the protective medicine given to Sotho children is so powerful that,*

---

[27] These themes are explored, in relation to Zulu ethnicised identities, in S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity'. Also see chapter 7.

[28] D.D.T. Jabavu, *The Black Problem*, p.p. 149-153.

[29] S. Marks, Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity, *passim.*

on contact with other children, it causes the 'Basotho sickness'.[30]

Previously, in rural communities, both baby and mother were secluded for a certain period. Rural Zulu communities in the nineteenth century confined the mother due to ritual impurity, which meant she represented a danger to the other inhabitants. The child was isolated in order to protect it from any possible 'evil' influences emanating from the village itself.[31] In Rooiyard, however, women often ended periods of seclusion much earlier, due to domestic and work commitments.[32]

This suggests additionally that women were becoming increasingly independent of rituals and customs which emanated from the countryside. It also implies that ritual and custom were being reformulated in a more explicit ethnicised context, due to the contact between different peoples in a small, urbanised area. People were beginning to define themselves against the ethnicised 'Other' more often, and perhaps rituals and customs were being reformulated in order to accomodate this wider form of cultural identification from 'below'. This is not to suggest that ritual impurities with respect to women were being disregarded in an urban milieu, at least not in Rooiyard:

> *Although many of the practices common under tribal conditions have fallen into disuse among the urban Bantu, the most salient feature of the ritual of birth, the seclusion of the mother and child is still rigorously observed by the Rooiyard Natives. It is interesting to note that where the crisis of life is physiologically intimately connected with women, that is, at childbirth and at the onset of the menses, the woman is carefully secluded.*[33]

It seems, rather, that some customs and rituals were being reformulated in order to accommodate the wider forms of consciousness evolving in these urban settings. Urban slum yards of the 1930s seem to represent a transitional stage between rural consciousness and 'urban' values. Ethnic, as well as clan, identities could emerge as defining factors of identity (although these could be broken down in an urban setting as well).

'Passive' forms of cultural ethnic identity were being defined on the boundaries between different ethnic groups, and ritual and custom were being reformulated in order to accomodate

---

30 E. Hellman, *Rooiyard*, p.p.59-60.

31 E. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus*, p.p.68-9. Similar rituals existed in many other southern African communities during this time. See footnotes 16 and 19 for other examples.

32 E. Hellman, *Rooiyard*, p.60.

33 Ibid, p.56.

this change. However, as ethnic identities became more explicit, it was still often women who defined the boundaries of the ethnic group. In Rooiyard many outbreaks of violence between men resulted from competition for women, and this violence was sometimes simultaneously ethnicised in its form, with men from different ethnic backgrounds fighting over women.[34] Similarly Sotho *Ma Rashea* on the Rand in the 1930s and 1940s sought to control women who were forging a circumscribed independence through participation in prostitution and illicit beer-brewing.[35] Thus ordinary migrant labourers, and more urbanised men, sought to keep control of women by reformulating the latters' position in a more explicit ethnicised sense. It was this fear of the loss of control of women which seems to have resonated with ethnic and nationalist culture brokers' attempts to reify the position of women within their own specific political ethnic projects - projects, moreover, which helped buttress the programmes of segregationist ideologues and facilitated the crystallisation of politically tribalist versions of ethnic identities.

One of the major issues which arose concerning the welfare of women in the 1920s and 1930s was the increasing prevalence of pre-marital pregnancies, and forms of sexual relationships outside of marriage. Pre-colonial social sanctions on sexual intercourse between young people were increasingly breaking down through the first half of the twentieth century, in both urban and rural areas. This was due not only to urbanisation, but to factors such as the spread of christianity and 'westernised' education systems. Peer group pressure, socialisation processes and public humiliation were powerful deterrents to pregnancies outside marriage in pre-colonial times. For example, young, rural unmarried Kgatla women who became pregnant outside marriage were subjected to considerable communal opprobrium:

> *If the matter ever became general knowledge, the unfortunate girl was subjected to every possible humiliation. She was stripped of all her decorations and no longer allowed to wear them; she might not cut her hair, but had to wear it long as a sign of disgrace; she was not allowed to mix with other girls, lest she pollute them as well; she might not wash her head, nor smear her face and body with the usual ointment of fat; and if she had not yet been initiated she was not sent to the bojale (girl's initiation school) with the rest of her coevals, but was separately treated. It was even said that attempts would be made to bewitch her, so that she might die together with the child in the womb.*[36]

---

[34] Ibid, p.92.

[35] These forms of gang formation often represented a type of ethnic reformulation of identity in a more urbanised milieu. See chapter 8 for a more comprehensive overview.

[36] I. Schapera, 'Premarital Pregnancy', p.p.55-56. Note that themes of pollution and ritual impurity are readily apparent in this quotation. This reinforces the assumptions of Douglas, in that concepts of pollution and impurity facilitate the re-establishment

Initiation schools and the practice of non-penetrative sex were other means of control. These social control mechanisms began to break down due to missionary opposition and as women increasingly migrated towards towns, especially from the 1930s onwards, although there were exceptions. Hellman found that many women in Rooiyard still endeavoured to send their sons back to the countryside to participate in circumcision rituals. This was still seen as a major factor in the attainment of manhood.[37] Hunter recorded that non-penetrative sex was practiced among both traditionalist and Christian communities in Pondoland during the early 1930s, and that the rate of pre-marital pregnancies between the two were not markedly different.[38] One of the main reasons proffered with regard to this increased migration of women is the breakdown of rural marriages due to the migrant labour process, which meant men were absent from home for considerable lengths of time.[39] Reasons for leaving included increasing rural impoverishment, searching for husbands who had not returned home and deserted their families, and the chance to elope with lovers.[40] Sotho women gained a particular reputation for migrating to towns on the Rand, and gaining employment in the illicit liquor trade and prostitution.

> *Most Basotho women migrants had come to South Africa in a last desperate effort to save their marriages and find their men. Once finally rejected, many seem to have resolved never again to become wholly dependent on men. Beer-brewing and other informal activities provided this opportunity.*[41]

The experience of poverty, abandonment and neglect, and the ability to earn an independent income in town, led to many women resolving to follow a more independent life-style.[42] This

---

of the dominant moral universe when this is symbolically challenged by behaviour outside the socially sanctioned boundaries that exist. Although the forms these sanctions took differed slightly in different communities, they all broadly took the same form. See footnotes 21 and 24 for other examples.

[37] E. Hellman, *Rooiyard*, p.74.

[38] M. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p.p. 183-184.

[39] Many anthropological articles published in the 1930s were specifically concerned with the breakdown of marriages due to the effects of the migrant labour system. See footnote 19 for just some of many examples. Contemporary historical works also stress the great strains imposed on African marriages due to migrant labour. See for example, C. Walker, 'Gender and the Development of the Migrant Labour System', and P. Bonner, ' "Desirable of Undesirable Basotho Women?" Liquor, Prostitution and the Migration of Basotho Women to the Rand, 1920-1945', in C. Walker (ed), *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945.*

[40] Ibid.

[41] P. Bonner, 'Liquor, Prostitution and the Migration of Basotho Women to the Rand', p.247.

[42] Although this was particularly obvious in terms of women migrating from Basotholand and what was to become the Ciskei, due to particularly devastating rural deprivation, it does seem to have been a general trend. E. Mphalele's novel *The Marabi Dance* provides a vivid illustration of urban slumyard life in the 1930s, illustrating the poverty and neglect, but also the vibrant culture, and the strength of independent women. This somewhat contrasts to the anthropological literature of the time, and many more contemporary historical works, which seem to place far more stress on the disintegrative effects of migrant labour, and the loss of moral values. Bozzoli's recently published work is one exception. She argues, on the basis of oral informants, that many women migrated to urban areas at this time for positive reasons such as a wish for increased independence, and not just because rural marriages were breaking down. (B. Bozzoli, *Women of Phokeng: Consciousness, Life Strategy and Migrancy in South Africa, 1900-1983*, London, 1991).

was often reflected in dance forms and other social behaviour. A. S. Mopeli-Paulus, a Sotho traditionalist and writer, inadvertently demonstrates the independence of Sotho women who took up prostitution in his autobiography:

> *I saw my Basotho women dressed in print skirts an inch below the knee, their blouses an inch above the navel, bracelets around their legs, running in the streets, swinging their coloured blankets in the air shouting 'If you are a man, come let me tell you keep away my boy! Go to the christians! Here is Benoni - Twatwa. We rule ourselves.' Then throwing their skirts above their knees and crying 'Take and eat.*[43]

This representation seems a complete inversion of prior social sanctions in rural communities. For example, young women who became pregnant outside of marriage in rural Kgatla communities were publicly mocked through songs by other girls and women. These songs included the use of the verb *xo ja*, 'to eat', which was also used for excessive copulation. Schapera notes that it was said of a 'loose' girl (his description) 'she is eaten by everybody',[44] and this verb was utilised in these mockery songs. He also states that his informants argued that this form of mockery was one of the most powerful sanctions against premarital pregnancy, being the form most feared by girls.[45] Perhaps the women to whom A.S. Mopeli-Paulus was referring were deliberately inverting these older forms of social sanction in order to visibly assert and demonstrate their own form of newly found independence. These newly forged female identities were heartily frowned upon by authors such as Mopeli-Paulis, and led to more explicit attempts by moralising ethnic entrepreneurs to construct a form of womanhood which emphasised 'passivity', subordination and domesticity, whilst criticising increased individualism for women. Anthropologists also attacked these newly forged identities. Schapera himself inveighed against the emergence of a 'class of flappers' among Tswana women - the modern girl 'with her short European skirt and irresponsible behaviour'.[46]

---

[43] Cited in P. Bonner, 'Liquor, Prostitution, and the Migration of Sotho Women to the Rand', p.231.

[44] I. Schapera, 'Premarital Pregnancy and Native Opinion', p.66.

[45] Ibid, p.67.

[46] I. Schapera, *Migrant Labour and Tribal Life: A Study of Conditions*, London, 1947, cited in C. Walker, 'Gender and the Development of the Migrant labour System', p.189. There is a more recent anthropological literature concerning women's use of their sexuality and bodies in order to retain dignity and even political power. See for example the following: S. Ardener, 'Sexual Insult and Female Militancy', in S. Ardener, (ed), *Perceiving Women*, London, 1975; D. Webster, 'Ethnicity and Gender in a Kwazulu Border Community', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, 1991; A. Berglund, *Zulu Thought Patterns and Symbolism*, London, 1976, p.p. 64-74. Also see *New Internationalist* magazine, May 1997, which reports upon a recent bare-breasted demonstration by Zambian women in protest against political corruption. This reflected similar demonstrations in late colonial times, when Zambian women protested against the colonial system. The Second Wave Feminist Movement of the 1970s in Europe and the United States also removed bras in order to symbolically reject patriarchy. All these examples demonstrate a fundamental challenge to patriarchy, or at least the carving out of a symbolic space which is not controlled by men.

The construction of Afrikaner ethnic identity in this period also involved reified images of 'virtuous womanhood', centred around ideological portrayals of motherhood. Twentieth century constructions of Afrikaner 'Mothers of the Nation' ideologies - or *volksmoeders* - initially arose in the context of the 1899-1902 South African war. The ill-treatment and suffering of women and children in the British concentration camps 'were central to the emotive portrayal of the nation's agony since both were seen as blameless victims'.[47] Notions of Afrikaner idealised womanhood had its roots in the nineteenth century, again in terms of defining itself against British oppression.[48] But the South African war, and Milner's subsequent policies of anglicization, made these ideologies more explicit, as Afrikaner culture-brokers sought to mobilise Afrikaner ethnic identity vis-a-vis British hegemony.[49] The processes of urbanisation and industrialisation, especially in the 1920s and 1930s, sharpened the patriarchal edges of *volksmoeder* ideologies. As was the case with many African communities, these processes eroded previous social sanctions which aimed at controlling young women. The difference was that Afrikaner women were proletarianised much quicker, and thus were able to consolidate a more unified working class position than African women. White women were integrated into the capitalist economy, whilst black women at least partially avoided full proletarianisation through participation in such activities as prostitution and illicit beer-brewing.[50]

The effects of increasingly rapid urbanisation and industrialisation, especially in the 1920s and 1930s, were of considerable concern to Afrikaner ethnic culture brokers. As older Afrikaner rural economies broke down, young Afrikaner women increasingly sought work in urban areas in order to supplement the family income. Whole Afrikaner families also moved to urban areas much earlier than African ones. The breakdown of rural economies, and the subsequent merging of poor Afrikaners with other Africans in slum areas, became a central focus of concern for an increasingly displaced Afrikaner intelligentsia consisting mainly of teachers, journalists and religious clergy. This group sought to construct a more exclusive Afrikaner identity than that proposed by Botha and Smuts, who advocated a white pan-South African form embracing both Afrikaners and English-speaking whites. English had now become the language of commerce, and this disaffected group sought to ressurect Afrikaans in importance. Family and home, for long the constructed realm of Afrikaner women, thus became a central focus for the dissemination of the new Afrikaner ideology of ethnic mobilisation. From the mid-1920s a plethora of popular magazines were produced, aimed

---

[47] D. Gaitskell and E. Unterhalter, 'Mothers of the Nation', p.61. See also E. Brink, 'Man-Made Women: Gender, Class and the Ideology of the *Volks moeder*', in C. Walker, *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*, and J. Butler, 'Afrikaner Women and the Creation of Ethnicity in a Small South African Town, 1902-1950', in L. Vail (ed) *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, 1989.

[48] See E. Brink, 'Man-Made Women', p.p.275-277.

[49] See H. Giliomee, 'The Beginnings of Afrikaner Ethnic Consciousness, 1850-1915', and J. Butler, 'Afrikaner Women and the Creation of Ethnicity', both in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism.*

[50] See B. Bozzoli, 'Marxism, Feminism and Southern African Studies', especially p.p. 155-167.

specifically at Afrikaner women. These sought to define what was 'authentically' Afrikaans in terms of domestic and cultural life.[51] Thus women could gain a certain amount of prestige by adopting this ethnic identity, and instructing others in how to behave as 'Afrikaner women'.

The fear of Afrikaner identity being swamped by English hegemony, cultural disintegration and economic deprivation often manifested itself most clearly in terms of the position of Afrikaner women in society. 'Poor whiteism' was becoming an increasing object of concern, and this was certainly a major focus of both Hertzog's Nationalist party, which broke away from Botha and Smuts in 1914, and Malan's Nationalist party, which itself broke away from the 'Fusion' government of Smuts and Hertzog in 1934. These splits amongst Afrikaner parties emphasise the divisions that existed regarding what best represented Afrikaner identity, and what best represented Afrikaner interests. Further splits occured in 1969 and 1982. Although there were differing reasons for these splits, they do emphasise that Afrikner identity was never the homogenous entity that politically tribalist ideologies portrayed.[52] Just as with many African communities, the 1920s and 1930s saw the growth of perceptions that working class Afrikaner young women were socially and sexually out of control. These fears were expressed most vociferously by professionals working in various capacities, providing another comparison with some African communities of the time. However this is not to suggest that these fears only arose from within these social and economic groupings. They resonated with the fears and anxieties emanating from various strata in society. Young Afrikaner women entering the workforce were becoming increasingly independent of parental control, as well as contributing considerably to the family household finances. Afrikaner women were particularly sought after in the burgeoning manufacturing industries of the 1930s. They were favoured above men because they could be employed at lower rates of pay, and often entered the world of wage labour a whole generation before the male members of their families. Ideological factors also played their part, with many employers considering women more suitable for factory work, due to supposed inborn abilities such as 'nimble fingers'.[53] The patriarchal authority of husbands and fathers was being increasingly defied as a result of these changes, and anxieties over the sexual conduct of young women was widespread in families.[54] This, together with Afrikaner culture brokers' fears that urban deprivation was breaking down affiliations with an exclusive Afrikaner identity, resulted in increased pressure for legislation against so-called 'miscegenation'. Housing crises exacerbated these fears in the 1930s. Indeed, the 1938

---

[51] For an insightful account of the importance of language and literature in disseminating this more exclusivist form of Afrikaner ethnic identity, see I. Hofmeyer, 'Building a Nation from Words: Afrikaans Language, Literature and Ethnic Identity, 1902-1924', in S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds), *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London, 1987. Also, H. Giliomee, 'The Beginnings of Afrikaner Ethnic Consciousness, 1850-1915', in L. Vail, (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa.*

[52] See H. Giliomee, 'The Growth of Afrikaner Identity', in H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* Yale, 1979. W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa*, also provides useful overviews.

[53] See for example J. Hyslop, 'White Working-Class Women and the Invention of Apartheid: 'Purified' Afrikaner Nationalist Agitation for Legislation Against 'Mixed' Marriages, 1934-1939', *JAH*, Vol 36, No 1, 1995.

[54] J. Hyslop, 'White Working-Class Women', p.p.62-63. Also E. Brink, 'Man-Made Women'.

election focused specifically around the differing views regarding legislating against 'mixed' marriages.[55]

7.2 Ethnic Boundary Markers and Routes of Escape: Some Reflections Upon the Relationship Between Gender, Modernity and Ethnic Identity in Pre-1948 South Africa

One of the most striking features of ethnicised identities in twentieth century South Africa is the increasingly explicit debates regarding the role of women. The debates inherent in moral ethnicities were often fundamentally concerned with this issue. Changes in womens' economic roles engendered changes in what constituted the meaning of 'womanhood', and this in turn challenged older forms of identity often based upon patriarchal relationships. Crucial to the re-definition of what represented 'idealised womanhood' was the primary role of motherhood assigned to women. Themes of purity, control and restraint permeate these ethnicised discourses, which originated largely from men. These themes also reflected a reformulation of older identities in order to accomodate the changes wrought by capitalism, urbanisation and segregation.

African institutions of marriage underwent considerable structural transformations during this time, especially in the 1920s and 1930s as African urbanisation and migrant labour increased. The influx of individualist, christian and capitalist values all placed a fundamental strain on an institution centred upon reciprocity, kinship and the submergence of the individual within the collective. Ethnic and nationalist culture brokers became increasingly concerned with what they perceived as a breakdown in African marital and family values, and these concerns resonated with various sectors of the wider African communities. These issues were, moreover, increasingly debated in a moral ethnic sense. People sought to define what best represented a marital status within a particular defined ethnic group, and these discourses resulted in a wide diversity of conceptualisations reflecting the diverse routes followed towards modernity by black South Africans at the time.

Bridewealth was often at the centre of both fundamental changes and vociferous debate, and reflected the ambiguous nature of moral ethnic and politically tribalist discourse of the time. These debates also reflected the ambiguous response of African women towards the institution. Various studies of urban locations in the 1930s found that *lobola* still represented a fundamental prerequisite in terms of community recognition of marriage.[56] Marriages could involve various combinations of church, state and *lobola* marriage rituals and custom. This reflected both the influence of christianity and urbanisation, together with the considerable

---

[55] Ibid, *passim.*.

[56] See for example E. Hellman, *Rooiyard*, p.p.79-8, E. Krige, 'Changing Conditions in Marital Relations', p.p.11-23, and D.W.T. Shropshire, *Primitive Marriage and European Law*, London, 1970 (1st ed 1946), especially chapter 6.

resilience of belief in the *lobola* system. Anthropologists of the time often found it difficult to define when a couple were actually married, due to the fact that there was no definite ruling on the matter in the locations themselves.[57] Added to this were the sometimes differing values held between couples from urban and rural areas, and different 'tribes':

> *When attachments occur between boys and girls of different tribes ...difficulties tending towards delay arise: the negotiating parties, ignorant of one another's customs, are suspicious and difficult to please, and the dangers of eventually breaking off negotiations are much greater.*[58]

Several factors were thus affecting African marriages at this time. Apart from misunderstandings of differing rural customs, these included the following: the absence of men for long periods of time due to the migrant labour process, often resulting in them abandoning their spouses; the breakdown of initiation systems for young people, to which missionary influence contributed considerably, and which ended an important element in socialising young people towards rural communal life-styles; the commercialisation of *lobola* in urban areas, which could entail it becoming a system of payment without the symbolic binding of the extended families involved. Related to this strain on marriages was the increase in pre-marital pregnancies, which also partially resulted from the reasons outlined as well as the breakdown of pre-colonial forms of non-penetrative sexual intercourse (again partially a result of missionary disdain), and the breakdown of social sanctions outlined in the previous section.[59]

People were thus selecting facets of pre-colonial custom in order to accomodate the social and economic changes wrought through the migrant labour system, the spread of christianity, and individualist ideology. Ethnic culture brokers seem to have responded to this by resorting to a combination of 'selective traditionalism' and Europeanised individualism. This was in order to forge an idealised concept of 'virtuous womanhood' which could counteract the perceived deterioration of marriages, and the rise in pre-marital pregnancies. The behaviour of women seems to have become extremely important to these - often male - ethnic entrepreneurs, as women were conceived as both embodying the cultural values of ethnic identities, and the main transmitters of these values to future generations through their perceived primary role as mothers. Thus ideological constructions of motherhood played a central role in these more explicit forms of identity. Furthermore, they resonated with the concerns of African men

---

[57] Ibid.

[58] E. Krige, 'Changing Conditions in Marital Relations', p.18. For a particularly illuminating example see S. Jingoes, *A Chief is a Chief by the People*, London, 1975, p.75.

[59] The anthropological literature on these issues is immense. Again, see footnote 19 for examples.

generally, who were becoming increasingly concerned with the breakdown of rural values and marriage forms due to the reasons outlined. It was in this milieu that specific 'Mothers of the Nation' ideologies materialised. In addition, these ideological constructions were forged in such a way as to appeal to some women, due to the fact that they offered a circumscribed form of freedom. However, the whole scenario was one of ambiguity, as these ideologies were being forged at the exact time that women were increasingly questioning patriarchal social structures, often reformulating them in order to forge a new life-style which itself offered a circumscribed form of independence from men. The first half of the twentieth century represented the growth of diverse routes towards modernity, as different identities, ethnic and otherwise, were forged, both for Afrikaners, Africans and others, such as Indians and 'Coloureds'. It also entailed a more explicit division of men into the public realm of politics and the wider community, and women into the domestic and private (although this was also ambiguous).

The 'selective traditionalism' exhibited by both male ethnic entrepreneurs and women in this period provides an interesting insight to the gendered nature of ethnic identities, as well as their ambiguous and diversified nature. Many women supported the institution of *lobola.* D.D.T. Jabavu noted this in his above mentioned address to an assembly of teachers in 1920, referring to the fact that a debate the previous night had resulted in many women supporting the institution, whilst many men had rejected it.[60] This rejection may have resulted from these men's sense of modernity being offended by the requirement to pay *lobola.* Jabavu himself rejected the institution, instead reifying idealised European conceptualisations of marriage and domestic motherhood, as already mentioned. Superficially, the abandonment of *lobola* would seem to have offered women more independence in terms of freedom of choice in marriage. However, this is to view *lobola* as a static, culture bound phenomenon. In fact, the process of migrant labour and the slowing of the urbanisation and proletarianisation processes had allowed women the space sometimes to reformulate this institution in order to carve out a more independent life-style for themselves. For example, the isolation of urban location families in the 1930s from their rural relatives, together with the fact that many men in urban locations abandoned their married partners and children without support or the formality of divorce, could result in women gaining a much greater independence in marriage negotiations than would have occured in a more rural context:

> *(I)t is not uncommon for a woman to receive her daughter's lobola, since location men who have left their families without support seldom or never claim the lobola. Careful enquiries elicited no single instance in which such a claim has been made,*

---

[60] D.D.T. Jabavu, *The Black Problem*, p.143.

and it is said that public opinion would be strongly against such an action. In tribal life the father and his relatives are responsible for the support of his wife and children, and in the location there is thought to be no moral right to lobola where such support has not been forthcoming. The woman never, of course, enters upon marriage negotiations on her own: some male relative will be called to act for her, but she will generally contrive to receive a money payment which she will spend as she pleases. The old form is thus still adhered to, but where, in the absence of other relations, a son-in-law or distant cousin acts for the mother he is usually a mere figurehead.[61]

This reinforces the above argument that women were carving their own circumscribed independence in these urban contexts, with changing marital relationships combining with activities such as illicit beer-brewing and prostitution to allow women a form of freedom, albeit in very oppressive circumstances, which they had gained for themselves. The response of traditionalists to the growth of these strong female identities was to re-structure their more explicit, politically tribalist forms of ethnic identity in order to allow women a circumscribed freedom within a domesticated context, reifying the sanctity of marriage and motherhood (marriage being increasingly rejected by women who had often been abandoned by men due to the migrant labour process). Independent women, and the breakdown of traditional forms of marriage without being replaced by Christian versions, threatened the values of 'respectability', 'purity' and patriarchy to which these ethnic entrepreneurs adhered, partially assimilated as they were within the moral and economic value systems of Europeanised middle class values. This is not to suggest that this elite group rejected previous rural values wholesale. Instead, they situationally selected those facets which could shore up patriarchy in the fast changing socio-economic climate of the time. Furthermore, these values had to resonate with women, at least women of the same social and economic grouping.

One woman who embodied this reformulation of gendered ethnic identity was Sibusiswe Makhanya. Although a product of mission education, Makhanya reflected many of the values of male nationalist and ethnic culture brokers of the time, often positively promoting selected facets of Zulu traditionalism.[62] Her work with the Bantu Purity League enabled her to gain a scholarship to the United States, from whence she returned as Natal's first black female social

---

[61] E. Krige, 'Changing Conditions in Marital Relations', p.15. See E. Hellman, *Rooiyard*, for other examples of the reformulation of *lobola* custom in an urban slumyard context.

[62] S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity', p.228. For a comprehensive analysis of the merging of 'selective traditionalism' with European value systems amongst African culture brokers of the time see chapter 9.

worker. Her experience in the States entailed an encounter with the strong feelings of 'race pride' existing there amongst many black people.

> *(S)he was no mere accepter of white middle class values. Her concern with 'purity' arose out of her own and her class's deeply felt experience. Her race consciousness was equally part of that deep experience, transmuted in the 1930s into a Zulu ethnic cultural consciousness.*[63]

Makhanya's Zulu ethnic cultural consciousness evolved in the general context of marital breakdown, pre-marital pregnancies and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, in rural and urban areas, already described.[64] Her concern with the 'purity' of the Zulu 'race', resulted in her acting as the first female adviser to the Zulu Cultural Society, an elite group of Zulu culture brokers who were advocating the return to various forms of pre-colonial Zulu social sanctions, such as a reformulated version of *hlonipha* custom. This would seem a blatant contradiction in terms, considering her independent personality and 'westernised' lifestyle. However, as the observation by Marks makes clear, Makhanya did not simply embody 'westernised' individualism and christianity. The elite ethnic culture brokers of this period were as much a product of their own societies as they were of mission education and ideologies of individualism. As such they represented one of the many paths towards modernity existing in this period. Makhanya's career also demonstrates how women could be incorporated within a reformulated form of patriarchal discourse, through the milieu of more explicit forms of ethnic identification. The values of Noni Jabavu, a relative of D.D.T. Jabavu and another product of mission education, portray many similar ostensible ambiguities.[65] The career patterns and life-styles of these highly educated women also demonstrate how women in general can be captured by patriarchal forms of ethnicised ideologies in order to police the boundaries of ethnic identities.

Strong, independently minded, Afrikaner women were also co-opted into patriarchal forms of Afrikaner ethnic identity in the first half of the twentieth century, the price of this co-option being the granting of a circumscribed freedom within the cultural sphere of ethnic political mobilisation. The ideological division of men into the political sphere, and women into the cultural, domestic sphere of mobilised Afrikaner ethnic identity allowed middle class women considerable influence in defining Afrikaners as a self-conscious group. The activities of the Afrikaans Christian Women's Association (ACVV) in Cradock, a small town in the Karoo

---

[63] S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity', p.228.

[64] For an insightful overview of these issues, which also demonstrates how mission education could partially incorporate soicalisation processes emanating from pre-colonial African communities, see D. Gaitskell, '"Wailing for Purity"'. Gaitskell also refers to the work of Sibusiswe Makhanya (p.p. 345-346).

[65] N. Jabavu, *The Ochre People: Scenes from a South African Life*, London, 1963. Also see chapter 9.

region of the Eastern Cape, during the first half of the twentieth century is a poignant case in point.[66]

> *(The ACVV) ...trod a careful, non-party line between securing the interests of Afrikaners and identifying itself with the National party. One could, in fact, be ethnic in orientation without being nationalist in the party sense...(The ACVV) ...were defining cultural symbols, particularly in religion and language, both wrapped up in the power-ful notion of the 'volk', protecting the community from loss by acculturation into other groups, and preserving an Afrikaner cultural base which could be defended in the political realm by men.*[67]

This straddling of the cultural/political fence manifested itself in several ways. For example, the ACVV carried out charity work for poor Afrikaners, whilst simultaneously pressurising the state to subsidise this provision. No other ethnic groups were helped in this manner by the ACVV, implying that they were pursuing a policy of cultural ethnic 'survival'.[68] They also promoted Afrikaner education, and ran several schools with state subsidies.[69] Significantly, the field of education also provided an arena where Afrikaner women promoted a policy initially differing from that of men. The ACVV actively promoted forms of education for poor Afrikaner boys and girls which would prepare them for a future in urban areas. This differed markedly from the preferences of Afrikaner men, some of whom pursued a 'back to the land' policy which was clearly impractical due to the commercialisation of agriculture, the subsequent extreme difficulty of running a small-holding and the decline in the need for *bywoners*, which initially supplied some Afrikaner men with a form of employment at the beginning of the century.[70] The National party eventually embraced a policy of vocational and technical education which could challenge the ascendency of the English-speaking population in commerce. The support of more urban oriented forms of education provides another example of the circumscribed independence that Afrikaner women could gain through promoting ethnic mobilisation via the cultural sphere. The ACVV funded schools utilising these forms of education within Cradock, and funds came from male benefactors due to the pursuasive abilities of these women. In this sense, they were indirectly influencing the male-dominated political realm. These women were pursuing 'a maternalism that concentrated on their "own" ',

---

[66] This section is based on J. Butler's work, 'Afrikaner women and the Creation of Ethnicity'.
[67] Ibid, p.p. 64-5.
[68] Ibid, p.p. 66, 68-69.
[69] Ibid, p.p.68-69.
[70] Ibid, p.p.68-70.

[71] but in doing so they carved out a considerable independence for themselves, and were able to influence political issues without fully crossing over from the cultural to the political sphere.

It was not only relatively privileged Afrikaner women who reformulated ethnic identities and challenged concepts of female submissiveness. Working class Afrikaner women adopted the symbols of the *volksmoeder* and adapted it in order to define a distinct identity for themselves.[72] The clothing industry employed about half of all white women in manufacturing industry during the inter-war years, and the vast majority of these women were Afrikaans-speaking. Unlike women's organisations such as the ACVV, these women were therefore 'economically active' in the formal sense, and not completely tied to the ideological concept of the *volksmoeder* as created by male ethnic entrepreneurs. They did not achieve the status of *volksmoeder* through voluntary service for the *volk*, which was the accepted route for gaining this status for middle class women.[73] However, it seems that the concept of the *volksmoeder* had permeated downwards from the middle-classes into all sectors of Afrikaner society, and this raised questions regarding the perceived morality of young Afrikaner women working in an industrial environment. They had thus to re-work the definition of the *volksmoeder* ideology in order to integrate it with their own socio-economic situation.

> *The volksmoeder ideal found resonance among middle-class women because it gave legitimacy to their role in society as wives, mothers and voluntary workers. Equally, it gave them a sense of stability and purpose in a rapidly changing world. So strong was middle-class acceptance of the concept of volksmoeder that it placed working-class women on the defensive. Working-class women adopted the symbols and terms of the volksmoeder and then proceeded to define it for themselves. In so doing they claimed their own legitimacy, as valid members of society.*[74]

For example, Afrikaner women working as garment workers on the Rand sought to retain their Afrikaner identity whilst becoming integrated within a proletarianised workforce. Many Afrikaner women employed in this industry became members of the Garment Workers Union, one of the most militant unions during the inter-war years. Afrikaner women had entered this industry in the 1920s, when mass factory production was initiated. Previously, it had been

---

[71] Ibid, p.70.
[72] E. Brink, 'Man-Made Women'.
[73] J. Butler, 'Afrikaner Women and the Creation of Ethnicity' and E. Brink, 'Man-Made Women'.
[74] E. Brink, ibid, p.291. See also I. Berger, *Threads of Solidarity: Women in South African Industry, 1900-1980*, London, 1992, and E.S. (Solly) Sachs, *Rebels Daughters*, London, 1957.

dominated by European-trained male artisans. Women were taken on as semi-skilled operatives, displacing white men and deskilling the jobs they previously held. This met the needs of mass capitalist production, providing a cheaper labour force, but did not sit easily with the reconstructed patriarchal form that Afrikaner ethnicised identity had taken. The Union formed in response to a rift between these women workers and the skilled male workers, and was able to forge a socialist consciousness amongst the former, which partially transcended Afrikaner Nationalist ideology by absorbing and celebrating cultural facets of Afrikaner identity whilst working for better wages and working conditions for women workers. The Union also sought to forge a multiracial membership, and had early successes. However, with the expansion of the industry during and after the Second World War, and the subsequent increase in first 'coloured' and then African women into the workforce, the Union was forced to introduce separate branches for African, 'coloured' and white members. During the 1950s, as Afrikaner women moved into middle-class occupations such as secretarial work, the Union gradually pursued a much more narrowly economistic trade-union consciousness. Nevertheless, the Garment Workers Union's work in the 1930s had demonstrated that Afrikaner cultural identity could sit with a socialist consciousness, if somewhat uneasily.

Proletarianisation and class conflict do seem to have offered a route of escape form tightly bounded notions of motherhood and idealised womanhood in this period, without entirely subverting the dominance of patriarchal, and ethnicised, discourse. Furthermore, these routes of escape often involved the mobilisation of ethnic identities in order to compete for scarce resources. Mobilised ethnic and class identities in this period also raised issues with regard to women's participation in violence, often perceived as primarily a male tendency.[75] The 1922 Rand Revolt illustrates this point. The threat to lower white wages, make fuller use of cheap African labour, and cut down on white supervisory workers, as a result of a financial crisis in mining, were the main reasons for what became one of the most militant moments of the white working class in South Africa.[76] Krikler has recently researched the participation of Afrikaner women in this revolt and has noted several instances where women participated in, and even led, violent acts against both the state authorities and strike breakers.[77] Implicit in his study is the suggestion that ideological gender divisions, such as the concept of the

---

[75] See chapter 8.

[76] See J. Omer Cooper, *History of Southern Africa*, London, 1994, p.p. 171-172, for a good summary of the main causes. Although the revolt did not pivot solely around Afrikaner ethnic mobilisation, Afrikaner ethnicity did play a considerable factor. Many Afrikaner urban migrants had gained employment on the mines during the first world war as many of the original white labour force had signed up for military service. Afrikaner migrants began to fill relatively high-paid semi-skilled and supervisory jobs, and a 1918 agreement with management ensured that no position filled by a white worker would be given to an African or 'Coloured' worker. The breaking of this agreement contributed directly to the revolt, and led to the formation of largely Afrikaner based working class 'commandos'.

[77] J. Krikler, 'Women, Violence and the Rand Revolt of 1922', in *JSAS*, Vol 22, No 3, 1996.

volksmoeder, at least partially break down in times of sharpened class conflict. Assaults on ideological constructs of masculinity were also apparent.

> *(An) assault on masculinity is perhaps the best way to account for the tactic of enforced stripping to which some strike breakers were subjected. It might also be interpreted as a denial of adulthood, since it is part of the daily routine of small children that they are dressed and undressed by others. Strikebreakers could thus be insulted as men and infantilized by the process.*[78]

However, in the final moments of the suppression of the strike by military forces and aerial bombardments, patriarchy re-asserted itself, as women and children were removed from the area about to be bombarded by the male participants of the strike.[79] It seems therefore, that at times of particularly brutal conflict, often involving issues of ethnic identity, gender identities can become debated. For at these historical junctures women are often able to partially invert male ideological dominance and gain a circumscribed independence.

In sum, several important developments occurred during, and immediately prior, to this period in terms of gender and ethnic identity formation. Previous pre-colonial gendered and ethnicised identities were becoming increasingly debated, due to uneven capitalist penetration, urbanisation and the migrant labour process. Much as Bozzoli has argued,[80] the particular way that the migrant labour system developed, with Afrikaner women being incorporated within the proletrianisation process much faster than African women, contributed fundamentally to the reformulation of gender identities in the twentieth century. The articulation between previous forms of patriarchy and the more explicit forms which arose in the wake of these processes was a major contributory factor in the shaping of the moral ethnic debates of the time. African women, who generally underwent a much later process of proletarianisation, often mobilised more explicit forms of ethnic identity around a defense of pre-colonial rural forms of life, increasingly under threat from land expropriation and the penetration of the migrant labour process. Afrikaner women often mobilised ethnic identities around their forming class positions, due to the more rapid proletrianisation process which Afrikaner people underwent. However, both resulted in the male construction of virtuous womanhood, often centred around various versions of 'Mothers of the Nation' ideologies which sought to retain patriarchal control of women. This was in order both to contain the various forms of independence women were gaining through the uneven urbanisation process, whilst, in terms of ethnicity, giving women a form of circumscribed independence which allowed them

---

78 Ibid, p.355. See p.p.355-358 for specific examples.
79 Ibid.
80 B. Bozzoli, 'Marxism, Feminism and Southern African Studies', *passim.*

more explicit control of the domestic, cultural spheres. The threat of women breaking down ethnicised boundaries was therefore partially subverted. Women often ended up policing the very ethnic boundaries which they were perceived to be breaking, through the circumscribed, ethnicised freedoms granted them. These ideologies articulated with both the universalist form of civic nationalism espoused by the ANC, and the narrower, more exclusivist form of ethnic nationalism which arose as a result of mobilised Afrikaner ethnicity.

7.3 Idealised Motherhood, Female Independence and Ethnic Identities in Post-1948 South Africa

A useful starting point in examining the relationship between gendered and ethnicised identities in this period is to analyse anthropological studies concerned with social change in post-war South Africa. These works often examined the same themes with which some anthropologists in the 1930s were concerned. The 'Red'-'School' division existing throughout rural areas of the Eastern Cape from the beginning of the century until its gradual erosion in the 1970s has been analysed by various anthropologists in terms of African responses to socio-economic change.[81] In terms of marriage, and other gender relationships, this cultural ideological division represented a fundamental shaping force in the reformulation of moralities. Mayer's research found that considerable changes in terms of moral values regarding relationships first became apparent around the time of the Second World War, in what was to become the Transkei and Ciskei:

> *It was in the 1940s that the 'sexual revolution' hit Blacks in the cities and School people in the reserves. Young people began to marry or just live together without waiting for parental initiative or even seeking for parental consent. Parents despaired of controlling their daughters, since, it seemed even draconian punishments were of no avail.*[82]

He also refers to the migration of young women to town in order to supplement family incomes, the level of which were dire due to the historical reasons outlined above. Many fell pregnant with illegitimate children, and often the young male fathers did not feel morally obliged to support the mothers concerned, or indeed to pay the traditional fine.[83] This would

---

[81] There are several works which deal extensively with this issue. See in particular P. Mayer, *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, Cape Town, 1965, P. Mayer, 'The Origin and Decline of Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', in P. Mayer (ed), *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society*, Cape Town, 1980 (other individual contributions in this volume also refer to the 'Red'-'School' divide), M. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, P. Qayiso, 'Xhosa Morality', Unpublished Paper, MS 16891/5, Cory Library Rhodes University. Also, chapter 3 for a detailed overview of the development of this divide and a more comprehensive analysis of its relevance to ethnic identities.

[82] P. Mayer, 'Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', p.34.

[83] Ibid.

seem to be a continuation of trends observed in the 1930s in other black African communities. Africans proffered several reasons for these social developments. An oral informant interviewed by Mayer's chief research assistant in the 1960s exemplifies this point:

> *People of today 'baphelelwe yinyaniso' (have no truth left in them). Christian faith is gone from the people. They are just pretending to be Christians. Educated people and those who are Christians are worse in their manner of behaviour than the Reds. Nowadays there are very few girls who still ...'ukumetsha'. The reason why we say so is because of the results (pregnancy) that we see. There are more cases of premarital pregnancy today than ever before. I think that the main cause for this is 'ukwanda kukhanyo' (widening of the horizons of enlightenment), 'nolwazi' (and knowledge). In the past children were not kept at school so long, so that they could attain high education. A standard VI pupil could become a lady teacher then...Moreover, today there are bioscopes that the children attend, where they see how tricks and 'izimanga' (surprising things) in love affairs are committed. As a result of bioscopes 'ubundlobongela' (felony) has increased.*[84]

This particular informant, Mamntande, also argued that the 'corrupting' influence of town life in general, and the lessening of disciplinary procedures in the home, contributed to young women becoming pregnant outside marriage.[85]

There are several issues arising from this testimony. Firstly, the decline of pre-colonial originating forms of non-penetrative sexual intercourse. Reference has already been made to it in general terms, and it provides one of several criteria which differentiate between 'Red' and 'School' communities in the 1950s. It seems young unmarried women from the rural 'School' sub-culture were far more prone to conceiving illegitimate children than those of predominantly 'Red' rural communities.[86]

---

[84] Evidence of Mamntande, P. Qayiso, 'Xhosa Morality', p.p.4-5. For similar observations in a different area see L. Longmore, *The Dispossessed: A Study of the Sex Life of Bantu Women in Urban Areas in and Around Johannesburg*, London, 1959.

[85] Ibid.

[86] P. Mayer, 'Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', p.p.34-5. P. and I. Mayer, *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, Cape Town, 1965, chapter 2, 15 and 16, provide a comprehensive analysis of this issue. See chapter 8 for the relationship between 'Red' and 'School' youth organisations and this imbalance of illigitimate births between the two sub-cultural ideologies.

Another issue raised by the above informant is the issue of education. The importance attached to education among broadly middle-class Afrikaner women has already been examined with respect to its influence in shaping ethnic identities. There are similarities in terms of black African communities, despite the difference in terms of historical shaping forces. Many of the first converts to christianity in the early part of the twentieth century were female, and this led many missionaries to take a special interest in raising the status of these women from the perceived 'barbarous state in which native women were kept practically in servitude'.[87] Additionally more girls than boys tended to attend mission schools in the Transkei and Ciskei from their inception onwards. Girls also often remained in education longer. Mayer argues that '(a)s a result of this greater exposure to church and school, an ideology of change was often more firmly inculcated in them than in males'.[88]

> *Red women tended to be more conservative than their husbands while School women were the opposite. Having had equal status with boys at school, often better-educated than their husbands, with experience of town and the ability to earn their own money, and holding offices in church and women's organisations, School women showed a great deal of self-confidence and independence...Large numbers of women from School homes went to work in town, and lived a life of 'free women'.*[89]

Women's self-organised prayer groups, or *manyanos*, generally seem to have allowed many christian African women to carve out a form of circumscribed independence for themselves in twentieth century South Africa, whilst contributing to a specific ideological form of motherhood.

> *Motherhood was central to African women's personal and cultural identity as well as their social and economic roles long before the advent of christian missions in South Africa. But church groups sought to transform, elevate and entrench the importance of marriage, wifehood and motherhood for women. They were among the powerful*

---

[87] Native Affairs Commission, 1903, para 3608, quoted in P. Mayer, 'Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', p.34. For an insightful overview of the development of African women's christianity in twentieth century South Africa, and its relationship with various constructions of motherhood, see D. Gaitskell, 'Devout Domesticity? A Century of African Women's Christianity in South Africa', in C. Walker (ed), *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*. Also see B. Hutchinson, 'Some Social Consequences of Nineteenth Century Missionary Activity Among the South African Bantu', *Africa*, Vol 27, No 1, 1957, which examines the motivations of southern African women in terms of turning to christianity in the nineteenth century.

[88] P. Mayer, 'Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', p.p.34-35.

[89] Ibid, p.35. Mayer observes that this resulted in many School men resorting to a reformulation of pre-colonial forms of female respect and subservience, for example making their married partners crouch on the floor at mealtimes while they sat at the table. This seems to represent another example of 'grass-roots' concern, and increasing debate, among males with regard to what was the rightful role of women in society.

ideological forces contributing to the ongoing centrality of the notion of motherhood in African women's organisation in the twentieth century.[90]

Connections can be made between women's education and religious affiliation, and their possible co-option into politically tribalist forms of ethnic identity, especially during the second half of the twentieth century. Many *manyano* members used their organisations to express concern with the rise in pre-marital pregnancies, loss of control over daughters and the need for other social sanctions in the face of the decline of older forms. Mamntande was herself a *manyano* member, and her concern over the erosion of older forms of pregnancy prevention is readily apparent. There are many similarities here between her concerns and those expressed earlier, for example Sibusiswe Makhanye. Similar concerns were expressed by older 'School' women. This is not to suggest that these religious affiliations were themselves necessarily exclusive, 'backward-looking' and conservative. Many groups such as these can be conceived as radical in some senses. For example, women's prayer groups were involved in defending remnant chieftaincies and identities in a rural context, the essence of early twentieth century moral ethnicity.[91] However, the values which they attempted to defend could easily be hi-jacked to promote the agendas of various ethnic culture brokers and apartheid ideologues intent on imposing a far more rigidified, politically tribalist version of ethnic identities in order to perpetuate their own various and varied political agendas.

Central to this was the fact that women in both Afrikaner and African communities seem to have been the primary educators and inculcators of cultural values in their children, directly through their role as mothers. The growth of individualism, facilitated in no small way by mission christianity and education, had entailed a reformulation of how women fulfilled their role as cultural transmitters in twentieth century South Africa. The appropriate form of education for children in a fast-changing socio-economic climate became a prime concern for many women, as has already been illustrated with regard to middle-class Afrikaner women. In fact, 'western' education was one of the elements of European 'life-styles' which even 'Red' communities constantly debated in terms of how much of it they should adopt in the 1950s.[92] Education was a very important issue amongst 'middle-class' African women in urban areas in the 1960s, both in terms of employment and increasing independence for themselves, and in terms of transmitting particular forms of morality into their children. An anthropological study of Langa township in Cape Town found that education was a major factor in re-structuring family relationships.[93] Women who took up employment commonly controlled the family

---

90 D. Gaitskell, 'Devout Domesticity?', p.p.271-272.

91 See for example, W. Beinart, 'Popular Protest and Women's Movements in Herschel District'.

92 P. and I. Mayer, *Townsmen or Tribemen*, Cape Town, 1971 edition, p.p.28-29, p.35.

93 M. Wilson and A. Mafeje, *Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township*, London, 1963.

budget, and represented the primary figure in instilling the values of 'western' education into their children. Their increasing independence also led to them becoming a major driving force behind ambitious husbands. 'Whether working or not...the wife is often a personality. One of the fieldworkers reported that: "Almost every township leader has a wife of equal, if not greater, effiiciency and drive" '.[94] Perhaps it would be more accurate to state that behind every successful man lay an exhausted woman. The small, but growing, male professional and social African elite situated in townships on the Rand in the 1960s also owed much to their mothers in terms of inculcation of the values of education.

> *It would appear that, as a general rule, the father needed to be educated himself in order to be interested in his son's education; but, with the mother, whether she was educated or not was irrelevant to her decision that only by a complete break with tribal life could she become emancipated and released from her status of perennial minor, and that this could best happen through the education of her children.*[95]

This seemed to have applied especially to widowed mothers who, by trekking to town and gaining employment, could escape the inferior societal position of a widow in rural areas and the institution of the levirate, which was still practiced in many rural communities of the time.[96] The possibility of escaping 'tribal' boundaries is implicitly obvious in this context. Women were migrating to town in order to gain an increasing independence, and to escape the moral universe and attendant individual constraints of rural communal life. However, many of these often ambitious women still adhered to selected rural values, and partially succeeded in transmitting them to their own children. In a statement made to one of the anthropologists working in the area, a member of the small professional elite made the following remark:

> *It is very queer, Mrs Brandel. You can't really understand it. Why should it be mother? You see, there was, and still is, that old custom of harshness to children, even when the parents were christians. Now I was a naughty boy and father always beat me. But I did things for mother...Mother had a way of putting things so that they would stay in your mind forever. She was not an educated woman, but she had a fund of African proverbs and idioms. Native wisdom, you know. Even African custom had its own philosophy.*

---

[94] Ibid, p.82.
[95] M. Brandel-Syrier, *Reeftown Elite: A Study of Social Mobility in a Modern African Community on the Reef*, London, 1971, p.239.
[96] Ibid.

And then, later in your life, it is those things that mother said and did which you remember.[97]

The testimony of Ms Mamntande further clarifies the point. It demonstrates an eclectic mix of concern over perceived loss of moral standards, an implied advocation of some form of reformulated pre-colonial social sanctions, and a criticism of individualist education and media implying that it was partially responsible for such issues as the growth in pre-marital pregnancies. Education was now an increasing arena of debate amongst Africans themselves, and many women seem to have advocated an eclectic mix of selective traditionalism and Europeanised education, ensuring the sanctity of the family. The brokers of politically tribalist versions of ethnic identity which arose in the apartheid years made much political capital out of these concerns, promoting idealised images of motherhood, and the perceived importance of mothers as cultural transmitters of the politically tribalist values to which these ethnic entrepreneurs adhered.

A further issue which seems to have arisen, especially in the post-1948 years, was the increasing discrimination between rural and urban lifestyles and the concommitant effect upon marital relationships, which was increasingly commented upon in anthropological works concerned with rural and urban social change in the 1950s and 1960s. Brandel-Syrier's study of a small black township professional elite living on the Rand in the 1960s found that there was a high percentage of 'inter-tribal' (her term) marriages amongst the group concerned, which she argued was one of the major indicators of 'de-tribalization' in southern African societies. However she also discovered a parallel increase in the number of partners marrying from the same background, in terms of them being born in urban or rural areas. She argued that this represented a shift of emphasis from 'tribal' to urban-rural differences in terms of reformulated marital relationships.[98] Marriage patterns in Langa, Cape Town, during the 1960s exhibited similar patterns.[99] Nevertheless, it seems very possible that this rural-urban differentiation between black Africans could be transposed in an ethnicised manner. It did not mean a decrease in terms of ethnic affiliations, rather a reformulation of them within a specific rural-urban milieu. Certainly rural-urban stereotypes were arising in both rural and urban areas during the 1950s and 1960s, and these often did not correspond with ethnicised stereotyping.[100] But even in these instances there were underlying ethnicised stereotypes, and

---

[97] Ibid, p.p.240-241. See also B. Hutchinson, 'Some Social Consequences of Nineteenth Century Missionary Activity', who found southern African women in the nineteenth century were also cultural transmitters of tradition, as well as pragmatically using christianity when it provided social and economic benefits.

[98] Ibid, p.85.

[99] M. Wilson and A. Mafeje, *Langa*, p.p. 76-82.

[100] See M. Wilson and A. Mafeje, *Langa*, p.35, p.128, and *passim*. For the rural Eastern Cape see the work of the Mayers, especially *Black Villagers and Townsmen or Tribesmen.*

these did not result from culturally brokered manipulation from above, but seem to have emanated from the historical experience of colonialism. In Langa during the 1960s Xhosa people were often stereotyped as precocious and a 'very hard people' (perhaps referring back to the considerable resistance Xhosa chiefdoms put up against the incursions of nineteenth century colonial forces). Mpondo people were sometimes stereotyped as 'wild' (perhaps having something to do with issues of circumcision and the development of specific youth organisations). Mfengu people were sometimes referred to as 'sell-outs' (again, referring back to the assistance some Mfengu people gave to the colonial forces in the nineteenth century).[101] However, there was always the possibility that they could, especially where communities who had been more rapidly incorporated into the migrant labour and money economy came into contact with communities who retained more facets of pre-colonial cultural traits and identities, due to a slower incorporation into these processes.[102] The sharpening of rural-urban divides also contrasts with African urban slum areas in the 1930s. Krige, for example, discovered no such divisions in her investigation of slum areas in the 1930s Transvaal, due in no small part to the frequency of inter-marriage between urban and rural originating people.[103]

Many Africans seem to have constructed different versions of what was meant by 'rural' and 'urban' in the post-war years, and these could be consciously inter-linked with constructions of 'tradition' and 'modernity'. Gender based conflict in marrages often involved conscious utilisation of these constructions as resources to either perpetuate patriarchy or to gain more female autonomy and independence. Township marriages in the Eastern Cape town of Grahamstown demonstrate these points.[104] Men could appeal to their own constructions of rural Xhosa 'tradition' in order to perpetuate patriarchal relationships, whilst women would often respond by arguing that these ideas were out of date, basing their conceptions of an ideal marital relationship upon a Europeanised, 'modern' model. However, these were not mutually exclusive divisions. Educated, urbanised, women sometimes situationally selected facets of reformulated Xhosa 'tradition' if this protected them from some of the worst excesses

---

[101] Ibid, p.35. See chapter 8 for an analysis of the relationship between circumcision, the development of different youth organisations and ethnic identities. Mfengu and Xhosa identities are explored fully in chapter 3. The Mayers' work, although not primarily concerned with ethnic identities, also suggests that the differences between 'Red', 'School' and 'Town' Xhosa values also evolved at least partially through Mfengu and Xhosa rivalry. In this sense, the rural 'Red'/'School' dichotomy can be perceived as part of the moral ethnic debate which arose in the wake of these fundamental changes and rivalries.

[102] See L. Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie: Race, Class and Politics in South Africa*, London, 1965, p.86-88. Kuper refers here o the rivalry between Zulu and Sotho people (see chapter 9 for a comprehensive analysis). It is interesting that the rivalries to which he refers take place at an educational institution. This possibly suggests that education was often at the centre of rural-urban ethnicised stereotypes from below. Kuper also noted that these stereotypes often involved constant deriding of various peoples' 'manhood' (see chapter 8). As mentioned earlier, this form of derision also took place in the 1922 Rand Revolt, and was often at the centre of marital conflict in post-war African societies. Constructs of 'manhood' were just as important in the formation of political ethnicities as were constructs of 'virtuous womanhood' and 'motherhood'.

[103] E. Krige, 'Changing Conditions in Marital Relations', p.3. Hellman's study, *Rooiyard*, makes similar findings.

[104] See V. Van Der Vliet, 'Traditional Husbands, Modern Wives? Constructing Marriages in a South African Township', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa: Festschrift for Phillip and Iona Mayer*, Pietermaritzburg, 1991.

of male behaviour, for example by utilising the *ukutheleka* custom.[105] Many, although certainly not all, men also accepted their marital partners working in paid employment, not least because this could contribute significantly to the family income. Conceptions of appropriate 'manhood' also figured largely in Xhosa men's situational selection of Xhosa 'tradition', and this could materialise in terms of contrasting selective traditionalist forms of marital behaviour with that of 'modern' white forms. White men were often portrayed as emasculated for allowing their marital partners equality within the home, as were educated blacks who adhered to variations on this theme.[106] These manipulations of 'tradition' and 'modernity' ensured a plethora of patriarchies.

The many forms of situationally selected identities arising in both rural and urban African communities were often situated within the arena of moral ethnicity. However, the values inherent in them could be appropriated by proponents of political tribalist versions of ethnicity, especially in the wake of apartheid. The introduction of the so-called 'Separate Development' policy and the attendant creation of 'Homelands', which gave so much purchase on political power to ideologues such as Mangosuthu Buthelezi, came at a time of considerable change in terms of consciousness and identity for many African people:

> *The period from the 1960s to the 1980s marked a new phase of incorporation of the old African chiefdoms, so that they lost much of their distinctiveness and increasingly reflected the predominant urban and wage-based culture. In retrospect, the rural revolts and protests of the 1950s proved to be a last attempt to defend the autonomy of the reserves...Many elements of African culture did survive or were reinvented in some form both in town and countryside...But the social bonds which some state ideologues argued that they were attempting to preserve tended to erode.*[107]

Many African people in rural and urban communities did situationally select facets of 'traditionalism' in order to forge new moral ethnic identities and battle for scarce resources in this period. Gender roles were often at the centre of these debates. One of the best accounts of the situational nature of gendered ethnic identity selection in this period is Webster's analysis of identity formation in Kosi Bay, Kwazulu Natal.[108] Webster argues that both men

---

105 Ibid, p.p.222-223.
106 Ibid, p.230.
107 W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa*, p.p.206-207.
108 D. Webster, 'Ethnicity and Gender in a Kwazulu Border Community'.

and women drew upon selective forms of traditionalism in order either to justify patriarchal forms of relationships (for men), or to challenge these forms (women). The region in question lies midway between former centres of nineteenth and early twentieth century Zulu and Thonga states. Webster found that men and women drew upon these diverse forms of pre-colonial and early colonial identities in order to debate or justify gender roles. Men drew upon selected Zulu 'tradition' in order to justify rural forms of patriarchy, whilst women drew upon selective facets of previous Thonga custom, which allowed them to construct an identity not so disposed to the subservient female role which men envisaged. Thus the geographical location and specific historical development of the area allowed men and women to debate gender identities within a moral ethnic arena. Again, these identities were open, fluid and processual. Migrant labour was also a significant factor, as many migrant men perceived a Zulu identity as advantageous in terms of gaining employment, due to the ethnicised stereotypes of mine management. Therefore, perceived notions of appropriate forms of manhood were at the fore of these male identities, with Thonga versions being stigmatised.

However, these 'imagined' identities were fluid, processual, and highly situational. It was the concerns inherent in them which both the apartheid state and politically tribalist culture brokers sought to hi-jack by crystallising ethnicised identities in a rigidified form which allowed for no debate.[109] The construction of appropriate roles for women, often centred around conceptions of motherhood, were important components of these imposed identities from 'above', the more so because they resonated with the every-day concerns of many people living in dire poverty and racist oppression.

Politically tribalist versions of Zulu ethnicised identity perhaps provide the best example of imposed constructions of motherhood in the South African context. The Inkatha Women's Brigade was launched in May 1977. It promoted a seemingly contradictory discourse of empowerment and development 'shot through with conservative appeals to women's maternal responsibilities, their obedience to their husbands and their commitment to the church'.[110] However, it would be wrong to suppose that the female membership of this organisation perceived this ideological discourse as oppressive. In a very similar fashion to middle-class Afrikaner women who utilised the ACVV in order to straddle the cultural/political divide in the first half of the twentieth century, members of the Inkatha Women's Brigade gained a circumscribed independence through joining the organisation. Additionally, many women members were also strong, independent characters, and often were not averse to participating in violence.[111] There were also material advantages in supporting Inkatha's policies and

---

[109] See chapter 3 for a systematic analysis, which also examines why some forms of politically tribalist identity were more successful than others in resonating with people's popular consciousnesses.
[110] S. Hassim, 'Family, Motherhood and Zulu Nationalism: The Politics of the Inkatha Women's Brigade', p.2.
[111] Ibid, p.p.12-13.

joining the Women's Brigade. Developmental projects were promoted in a way which was symbolically significant for many Christian Zulu women. For example, community garden organisations and sewing groups were organised which tapped into earlier forms of Zulu women's organisations, whilst simultaneously promoting class deference.[112]

Ideological constructions of Afrikaner motherhood were also undergoing a process of reformulation from the 1960s onwards. Economic growth and the apartheid system had combined to ensure Afrikaners in general a more dominant place in South African society, with disparities in wealth between Afrikaner and English-speaking sections rapidly disappearing. Afrikaners were rapidly being absorbed into a more homogenous consumer culture, influenced by cultural values emanating from both the USA and Europe.[113] Indeed, the 'apartheid period was one of suburbanization and the spread of a rather derivative consumer culture spliced on to the gnarled old settler stock'.[114] This meant that earlier culturally brokered forms of Afrikaner motherhood, centred around the suffering of Afrikaner women during the Boer war, or within the context of ethnic mobilisation in order to avoid anglicization and the disappearance of a specific Afrikaner identity, were becoming irrelevant. Divorce and abortion increased throughout the 1960s and 1970s, representing just two indicators of Afrikaner women's increasing social, sexual and economic independence. This was a result of general economic growth, the increasing influence of American and European individualism, higher levels of education, increasing dissatisfaction with patriarchal dominance, and the fact that most of the domestic tasks often assigned to women were undertaken by black domestic workers. The increasing levels of affluence and individualist aspirations also meant that the home was no longer the pivot around which Afrikaner ethnic mobilisation turned. Indeed, Afrikaners had now reached a level of psychological security regarding their ethnic identity which enabled them to increasingly debate the necessity of apartheid as constructed under Verwoerd.[115]

Events such as the 1976 Soweto uprising, the gaining of political independence from Portuguese colonial rule by Mozambique and Angola in 1974, and Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, combined with international condemnation of apartheid, the need of capitalist organisations for a more skilled workforce, and increasing internal unrest to force Afrikaner

---

[112] Ibid, p.3. Also see S. Meintjes, 'Family and Gender in the Christian Community at Edendale, Natal, in Colonial Times', in C. Walker (ed), *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*, for an overview of these earlier forms of women's identity formation.

[113] For an insightful overview of this process, see W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa*, p.p.171-180.

[114] Ibid, p.173.

[115] This is broadly the argument of Giliomee in his article 'The Growth of Afrikaner Identity', in H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds), *Ethnic Power Mobilised: Can South Africa Change?*, Yale, 1979. However, this is not meant to suggest that the gradual breakdown of apartheid was easily undertaken. The *Verligte-Verkampte* split, the formation of the Conservative party in 1982 from breakaway segments of the Nationalist Party, Botha's turn to a technocratic-militaristic form of rule in the 1980s, and the growth of neo-fascist Afrikaner based groups in the 1980s and 1990s all illustrate that what it exactly meant to be an Afrikaner was a highly debated contestation. For an overview of this, see W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa*, especially chapters 6, 7 and 10.

ideologues to undergo a painful redefiniton of apartheid and Afrikanerdom. In terms of the *volksmoeder* ideology, this meant that women were now portrayed - from the 1980s onwards - as the 'spiritual' defenders of Afrikaner identity, upholding Afrikanerdom within the country's borders which Afrikaner men fought to preserve at the borders and beyond. However, with increasing unrest throughout the 1980s, it was becoming apparent that the more exclusive definition of Afrikaner ethnic identity was no longer tenable. Gaitskell and Unterhalter argue that ideologies of motherhood were adjusted accordingly, with an attempt to stress the common experiences of motherhood across 'race' boundaries. This was in order to pre-empt the ANC's own policy of stressing their version of universal experience of motherhood. For example in 1983, Frederica van Rooyen was appointed by the Minister of Internal Affairs to chair a committee trying to bring 'coloured' and other groups closer. Thus when 'the boundaries of the political nation were about to be extended, Afrikaner women were enlisted to promote reconciliation'.[116] Afrikaner women were being portrayed as the domesticated defenders of the newly re-defined boundaries of Afrikanerdom. Nevertheless, and in partial contradiction of the arguments of Gaitskell, Unterhalter and other academics who stress the power of ideologies of 'Motherhood', these identity constructions increasingly failed to reflect the reality of women's lives as the second half of the twentieth century progressed. Motherhood could mean many things to women (and, for that matter, men) both in Afrikaner and African societies, and politically tribalist versions of motherhood could only capture part of this lived reality. Women were portrayed as policing the boundaries of ethnicised identities, but were increasingly able to escape them.

7.4 'Motherhood' and the Gendered Nature of Ethnicised Identities in Twentieth Century South Africa: Some Concluding Remarks

A recent feminist analysis of nationalism, with specific reference to South Africa, has posited the argument that the temporal anomaly within nationalism, simultaneously looking nostalgically to the past and impatiently to the future, is typically resolved by figuring the contradiction as a 'natural' division of gender:

> *Women are represented as the atavistic and authentic 'body' of national tradition (inert, backward-looking, and natural), embodying nationalism's conservative principle of continuity. Men, by contrast, represent the progressive agent of national modernity (forward-thrusting, potent and historic), embodying nationalism's progressive, or revolutionary principle of discontinuity. Nationalism's anomalous relation to time is thus managed as a*

---

[116] D. Gaitskell and E. Unterhalter, 'Mothers of the Nation', p.66.

natural relation to gender.[117]

This also applies to ethnic identities.[118] Women were, and are, often portrayed as the 'passive' cultural transmitters of ethnicised discourse, and the dynamic, public, political sphere as the prime preserve of men. There is an interesting comparison to be made here between the impulses of rural African communities relatively unaffected by colonialism and capitalism in the early twentieth century, and the more explicit ethnicised forms which later arose. As mentioned above, women were often symbolically situated within a transitional, liminal state in many of these early communities, and thus represented a 'threat' to the survival of clan or 'tribe' identity. They seem to have been placed on the borders of these rural, communal identities, both defining them and offering a potential threat to their existence. Thus elaborate social controls were incorporated which sought both to control the behaviour of women-especially in terms of sexual behaviour-whilst offering them a form of circumscribed independence. This seems to have been constructed in a more explicit, ethnicised sense by early twentieth century ethnic culture brokers, who were becoming increasingly concerned with the effect of urbanisation upon women (especially in the context of pre-marital pregnancies and the change in values concerning sexual intercourse and marriage). The first half of the twentieth century seems to have marked a reworking of the patriarchal construction of the position of women within various black African ethnic discourses. Furthermore, these reformulations occured in order to accommodate the changes wrought in peoples consciousnesses, as social scales widened with the introduction of 'westernised' education and individualist value systems. In Benedict Anderson's parlance, larger societies could now be 'imagined', and in a more explicit, debated sense. The fundamental need for human beings to categorise, and the attendant creation of symbolic, liminal states in order to overcome experiences which did not integrate with these categorisations, can be perceived as operating in a larger, reformulated sense in these more explicit forms of early twentieth century identities. Similar reformulations occured within Afrikaner communities, but these took a specific form, due to the quicker process of proletarianisation and the implementation of institutionalised racism.

However, as has also been illustrated, women's roles did not fit neatly within this revamped form of ethnicised, patriarchal discourse. In direct contrast to the image of 'passive' cultural transmitters, both African and Afrikaner women sought to implement changes in the education systems available to them, which would resonate with the fast-changing socio-economic circumstances of the time. They were far more prominent than men in terms of forging these changes, and sometimes their ideas predominated in the face of male opposition. Elite groups of women from both African and Afrikaner communities were able to manipulate their imposed

---

[117] A. McClintock, 'Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family', *Feminist Review*, No 44, 1993.

position within 'Mothers of the Nation' ideologies in order to carve a considerable form of independence for themselves within the sphere of education and welfare. Furthermore, these ideologies could be reformulated in order to partially resonate with specific class experiences, and women were often at the forefront of violent conflict, promoted as the specific sphere of men, at historically specific times of social and economic dislocation. As well as forging a circumscribed independence for themselves, albeit within the dominant ideological discourse of ethnicised patriarchy, women could also escape ethnicised boundaries completely. Women only adhered to politicised concepts of 'Motherhood' when it resonated with their own interests, and many - especially in urban areas - have taken up other forms of identity.[119] Nevertheless, politicised ideologies of 'Motherhood' retain a powerful pull on the consciousnesses of women, despite - or maybe more appropriately because of - the increasing globalisation of contemporary culture and economy.

---

[118] The relationship between nationalist and ethnic identities is examined in chapter 9.

[119] It is also important to recognise that 'motherhood' entails far more than just a politicised ideology, and thus is not necessarily easily amenable to ethnicised political messages. See C. Walker, 'Conceptualising Motherhood in Twentieth Century South Africa', *JSAS*, Vol 21, No 3, 1995.

8. VIOLENCE, MALE SOCIALISATION AND ETHNIC IDENTITY: THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Violence, masculinity and ethnic identity are closely intertwined. Nationalist and ethnic ideologies are often patriarchal, and expressed in an aggressive, violent manner. Politicised ethnicity is commonly constructed as a male-dominated sphere, women often being placed outside politics and primarily conceived of as 'reproducers of the nation' and 'cultural transmitters' of a nation's or ethnic group's identity.[1] This is not to suggest that women are not sometimes violent,[2] but most violence does seem to emanate from males, especially when issues of identity and ethnicity are involved.

This chapter aims to explore the relationship between masculinity, violence and ethnic identity. Cultural factors, especially male socialisation, are particularly emphasised, and these are argued to be an important element in the formation of ethnic identities.[3] Psychological and psychiatric ideas concerning violence are also explored in the South African context, whilst being situated within the wider socio-economic contexts of the time. This includes an analysis of Fanon's theoretical approach to violence, and how this offers explanatory potential regarding the relationship between ethnic identity, violence and male socialisation. Gender divisions, generational tensions, and the impact of 'modernity' will also receive critical analysis. There is a specific emphasis on reformulated Mpondo identities throughout the chapter. This is especially the case in the section dealing with the connections between migrant labour, ethnic 'faction fights' and pre-colonial forms of violence. The reason for this emphasis is due to the rich accumulation of material on youth and migrants among the Mpondo, allowing a thorough investigation of these interrelated issues.[4] Comparative material concerning communities elsewhere in South Africa is covered in other chapters.

---

[1] See for example the introduction to A. Anthias and N. Yuval-Davis' *Woman-Nation-State*, London, 1989.

[2] A contemporary example of women participating in violent genocide is reported in the British newspaper *The Guardian*, August 26th 1995. The paper quotes the findings of *African Rights*, a London-based human rights organisation, who found that educated women, particularly teachers and school inspectors, participated widely in the widespread murders of Tutsi peoples in Rwanda just prior to the fall of the Hutu dominated government.

[3] The institution of chieftaincies were/are also important in contributing to ethnic identities and collective violence. This is explored in chapter 3.

[4] See especially the following: W. Beinart, 'The Origins of the *Indlavini*: Male Associations and Migrant Labour in the Transkei', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, 1991; W. Beinart, 'Worker Consciousness, Ethnic Particularism and Nationalism: The Experiences of a South African Migrant, 1930-1960', in S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds), *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism*, London, 1987; W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence in Southern African Historiography', *JSAS*, Vol 18, No 3, 1992; P. Mayer, 'Introduction: Subcultures, Moralities and Migrant Labour', in P. Mayer (ed), *Migrant Labour: Some Perspectives From Anthropology*, 7 Vols, Typescript, Rhodes University Migrant Labour Project; T. Dunbar Moodie, 'The Moral Economy of the Black Miners' Strike of 1946', *JSAS*, Vol 13, No 1, 1986; T. Dunbar Moodie, ' Migrancy and Male Sexuality on the South African Gold Mines', *JSAS*, Vol 14, No 2, 1988; T. Dunbar Moodie, 'Social Existence and the Practice of Personal Integrity. Narratives of Resistance on the South African Gold Mines', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa*; T. Dunbar Moodie, 'Ethnic Violence on the South African Gold Mines', *JSAS*, Vol 18, No 3, 1992; T. Dunbar Moodie and V. Ndatshe, *Going For Gold: Men, Mines and Migration*, London, 1994; M. O'Connell, 'Xesibe Reds, Rascals and Gentlemen at Home and at Work', in P. Mayer (ed), *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society*, Cape Town, 1980; K. Breckenridge, 'Migrancy, Crime and Faction Fighting: The Role of the *Izitshotzi* in the Development of Ethnic Organisations in the Compounds', *JSAS*, Vol 16, No 1, 1990.

8.1 Male Identity Crises, Youth Gangs, Socialisation and Violence in Early to Mid Twentieth Century South Africa.

As explored in chapter four, the fragmentation of patriarchy was an important result of colonial capitalism. The dominance of older men over women and young people was being challenged. This entailed new definitions of masculinity, as young men sought to assert themselves in the space created by the breakdown of rural authority. However, these newly formed masculine identities shared many of the values inherent in pre-colonial societies, if in a reformulated manner.

Traditional forms of male socialisation in the Eastern Cape corresponded with the 'Red'/'School' cleavage so prevalent in that area. 'Red' Xhosa held tenaciously to pre-colonial, if reformulated, customs and mores. What is particularly interesting is the fact that this adherence to facets of pre-colonial identity enabled 'Red' Xhosa communities to retain control over young people in a far more effective fashion than 'School' communities did. This included channelling male violence and sexuality. The Mayers have analysed these control mechanisms in considerable depth, and their work provides an interesting comparison between traditionalist and *Indlavini* male associations. For both in their own way illustrate how different societies sought to reformulate their identities, more or less successfully, in what Walter terms a 'crisis of integration'.[5] Furthermore, neither group managed to completely resolve the challenge to previous forms of identity.

Many rural communities in the Ciskei and Transkei formed traditionalist stick-fighting groups, associated with wider traditionalist youth associations. The Xhosa have a strong military tradition, and this was still reflected in male socialisation processes at the time of the Mayers' studies in the 1960s.[6] Older members of 'Red' Xhosa societies largely managed to retain authority over young people in the Eastern Cape when traditional authority in societies in the north-eastern Transkei and southern Natal were being challenged by youth groups such as the *Indlavini.* Male violence and attendant control mechanisms were very much involved with both forms of identity. Furthermore, it can be argued that these forms of youth associations are examples of reformulated moral ethnicity, in the sense that they provoked debate over

---

[5] E. Walter, *Terror and Resistance: A Study of Political Violence With Case Studies of Some Primitive African Communities*, Oxford, 1969, p.291.

[6] P. and I. Mayer. 'Socialisation by Peers: The Youth Organisation of the Red Xhosa', in P. Mayer (ed) *Socialisation: The Approach From Social Anthropology.* London, 1970; P. and I. Mayer. 'Self-Organisation by Youth amongst the Xhosa - Speaking Peoples of the Ciskei and Transkei', 2 Vols., unpublished typescript, 1972; P. Mayer. 'A Dangerous Age: From Boy to Young Man in Red Xhosa Youth Organisations', in P. Spencer (ed.), *Anthropology and the Riddle of the Sphinx*, London, 1990. For similar socialisation processes elsewhere in South Africa, and their reformulation in the wake of the migrant labour process and colonial land expropriation, see for example J. Clegg, 'Ukubuyisa Isidumbu - "Bringing Back the Body": An Examination into the Ideology of Vengeance in the Msinga and Mpofana Rural Locations, 1882-1944, in P. Bonner (ed), *Working Papers in Southern African Studies*, Vol 2, Braamfontein, 1981. Clegg, like the Mayers below, argues that stick-fighting was utilised in this period in order to contain 'faction fighting' over land shortages, and that serious violent confrontations only occurred where these control mechanisms were not in place.

what form of ethnic identity best represented the people at times of rapid socio-economic change. 'Red' youth groups in the Eastern Cape area were largely self-organised, but with traditionalist values and priorities instilled at particular junctures in young peoples' lives. Both fighting and sexual behaviour are singled out by the Mayers as areas which received much attention by 'Red' Xhosa society in terms of the implementation of socialisation processes. Early training for stick-fighting amongst boys was carried out by adults:

> *In what is called 'thelelekisa', women will catch hold of the hands of two little boys, two or three years old, and make them hit each other in the face, until the children get excited and angry and start lunging out on their own account, scratching and biting for good measure. The women look on with loud laughter.*[7]

Mothers similarly encouraged their children to participate in stick fighting in Mpondoland during the first half of the twentieth century.[8] Adult supervision and instilling of values regarding stick-fighting continued amongst 'Red' groups in the Eastern Cape until boys reached the age of eight or nine. Then the boys entered a series of self-policed stick-fighting activities. By this time boys had internalised a set of norms and rules which were aimed at avoiding excessive violence. However, the *Intlombe* stage marked the end of stick-fighting and the start of mature male adulthood, and this break was marked emphatically by the process of male circumcision. Young men who passed through the *Intlombe* stage were now expected to deal with disputes through discussion and debate, and left their stick-fighting associations. *Intlombe* members were then trained not only to respect communal and official law, but also to enforce it. The Mayers quote a headman's explanation of this change: 'These young men are expected to be future councillors and headmen. They are to deal with the *inkundla*, the headman, the chiefs, Bantu commissioners, and magistrates. These will not respect one for one's strength in fighting but for eloquence and skill in solving problems'.[9] This comment also reflects the paradoxical nature of 'Red' Xhosa resistance ideologies. Although they resisted full integration with western oriented custom and mores (albeit in a specific racist South African context), by the twentieth century there was a fatalistic acceptance of 'white' hegemony.

The entrance into 'Red' Xhosa conceptions of 'manhood' was therefore marked sharply by circumcision and attendant socialisation. Furthermore, this entailed a restraint on violence, even the controlled violence pursued by the junior *Mtshotsho* groups. The training received by rural Xhosa through the remnants of the *Intlombe* socialisation process was valued by many

---

[7] P. and I. Mayer, 'Socialisation by Peers', P.165.
[8] M. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, London, 1964 (2nd ed. 1st ed 1936).
[9] P. and I. Mayer, 'Socialisation by Peers', P.174.

young men during the period of insurrection and ungovernability from 1985 to 1989, as their debating and oratorical skills ensured discipline in peoples' courts during a time of extreme violence.[10]

Respect, restraint and control were fundamental to 'Red' Xhosa male socialisation processes. In the context of the 1980s period of insurrection in East London, the *Intlombe* males' skills can be perceived as being utilised at a time when there was a definite 'crisis of integration', marked by widespread violence, crime and governmental oppression. Nevertheless, male 'violence' was condoned in 'Red' Xhosa societies up to at least the 1960s in certain circumstances. Indeed, it was accepted and encouraged as part of the socialisation process as long as certain moral restraints were observed. The Mayers distinguished between two forms of stick-fighting; the closely controlled and regulated stick-fighting matches, and the far less frequent, and far more violent *idhabi,* or battles, which often reflected adult tensions between locations as well as tensions between *Mtshotsho* groups in different localities.[11] Amongst *Mtshotsho* groups, animosity over young women was often a cause of conflict as well, which perhaps illustrates again how women are ideologically conceived by men as shaping the boundaries of male identity. This suggests a certain difficulty in controlling male violence, but also - due to the fact that it was such a rare occurrence - the effectiveness of the 'Red' Xhosa system of controlled aggression.

The *Indlavini* groups also constructed a system of moral restraints, very similar to that of 'red' Xhosa, despite the fact that the associations were indicative of a trend towards a breakdown of traditional authority. Again, this would seem to be an example of an attempt to overcome a 'crisis of integration'. Traditionalist youth associations, or *bhungu*, also existed in the north eastern Transkei and southern Natal in the early twentieth century. However, these groups were beginning to give way to different youth associations, such as the *Indlavini*, by the 1930s. The *Indlavini* arose in Pondoland due to the gradual permeation of migrant labour into Mpondo society particularly by the 1920s.[12] Although the *Indlavini* challenged patriarchal control over women and youths, and became socially disruptive, they did not fundamentally challenge the social constructs of rural life: 'They were constructing a new masculinity which was more violent and less respectful of elders, but many of them still paid bridewealth and married'.[13] *Indlavini* norms of combat were still restrictive and rule-bound. The ex-*Indlavini* interviewed by Beinart insisted that they always fought with sticks. Major rural events such as weddings,

---

[10] L. Ntsebeza. *Youth in Urban African Townships, 1945-1992: A Case Study of the East London Townships.* M.A. Thesis, Department of Economic History, University of Natal, Durban, Nov, 1993.
[11] P. and I. Mayer. 'Socialisation by Peers.' P.172.
[12] See chapter 3 for an overview of the reasons for the rise of the *Indlavini.*
[13] W. Beinart. 'The Origins of the *Indlavini*', P.123.

which were important gathering points for the *Indlavini* as they provided contact with women and a place to assert their group identity, were often disrupted.

Age and gender were fundamental facets in shaping pre-capitalist identities as capitalism developed. Aspects of pre-capitalist societies were often retained in modified form, 'fragmenting then moulding, recreating from older forms a new society in which aspects of the old are important but always deceptive - sometimes genuinely an older form which has been retained, and sometimes a new form appearing in an older guise'.[14] This is certainly the case with the emergence and decline of the *indlavini* and even the traditionalist youth associations. Both can perhaps be perceived as part of a debate concerning what best represents 'masculinity' within given communities, a debate often centred around what was acceptable violence, and often itself marked by violence. Furthermore, these debates should perhaps be understood in terms of self-worth and integrity rather than solely in terms of changing, or forming, class conditions.[15] Peoples' core values and experiences were being renegotiated in the wake of colonial capitalism, and its attendant ideologies. This is the essence of the debate inherent in moral ethnicity.

Phillip and Iona Mayer carried out a systematic study of the *Indlavini* in areas of Pondoland, as part of a larger project studying various youth organisations in parts of the Ciskei and Transkei during the 1960s. Much of this work is still unpublished.[16] Although their material-as that concerning the Eastern Cape above-refers to a later period it is worth analysing their findings, as they provide lucid insights into the importance of male organisations in socialising young men. It also points to the prevalence of violence, sanctioned and unsanctioned, among these organisations. Furthermore, these associations had changed little in terms of organisation and belief systems from their initial manifestations in the 1930s. The Mayers specifically linked the propensity to violence among *Indlavini* in Enkantolo (their place of field work) to cultural factors, especially the lack of a circumcision ritual and its attendant socialisation process.[17]

The Mayers recorded several other aspects of *Indlavini* activity, especially concerned with violence, which contrasted with more traditionalist groupings in the Eastern Cape and Pondoland. *Indlavini* group relations were not confined to a regular area, usually within 'location' bounds, unlike more traditionalist groupings.[18] *Mtshotsho* groups in the Eastern

---

[14] J. Guy, 'Analysing Pre-Capitalist Societies', P.33.
[15] See the exploration of psychological factors below.
[16] P. and I. Mayer, 'Self-Organisation by Youth'.
[17] Ibid, Vol 2, Chapter 7, p.174.
[18] Ibid, p.173. See P. and I. Mayer, 'Self-Organisation by Youth', Vol 1, Chapter 1, for the importance of territorial boundaries for traditionalist groupings in the Eastern Cape, and Vol 2, Chapter 5 for similar examples in Pondoland.

Cape were instilled with an intense awareness of local community allegiance, even though there was interaction between groups from different areas:

> *Reciprocal visiting by umshotsho groups brings new contacts with outside age-mates; at the same time, it is very much a community business, the location or section group always going as a whole and identifying itself as 'the umshotsho of such and such a place'. Outside the location, on the regular circuit, a lone visitor is not accepted.*[19]

It was only after young men had passed through the circumcision ritual, and entered the *Intlombi* socialisation stage, that they began to travel much further afield, and as individuals rather than a communal group. As mentioned above, the *Intlombi* stage marks the passage into traditionalist 'Red' concepts of 'man-hood', where conflicts previously settled by violence are now resolved through the due process of law and rational debate. The Mayers link this to the development of a concept of 'nation'.

> *Young men, then, at the same time as they lay their sticks aside in favour of 'law', are supposed to lay aside the intense, suspicious local-group preoccupations of the umshotsho boys...Family and local community loyalties will always be important, but the youth organisation adds new possibilities for self-identification with something wider, namely with the Red Xhosa 'nation'. Youth visiting provides an outlet for the youthful urge to roam...supplements the total networks of relations between families, and the networks of political relations, by adding a new network independent of either. It also gives ego first-hand experience of the community of expectations that exists among his age -mates...By the Intlombi stage he has achieved effective self-identification as a member of a category that extends 'from across the Bashee to across the Great Fish River.*[20]

The *Indlavini* did not experience these forms of socialisation processes. They were not confined to specific areas like the *Mtshotsho* groups, and travelled considerable distances without experiencing the socialisation process attending a circumcision ritual. The Mayers suggest that 'Red' Xhosa had a form of Xhosa 'nation-hood' instilled in them through the

---

[19] P. and I. Mayer, 'Self-Organisation by Youth', Vol 1, p.16.
[20] Ibid, p.p.18-19.

gradual socialisation process experienced by young men, which allowed controlled forms of aggression whilst gradually developing a sense of responsibility and a widening concept of 'imagined community'. The *Indlavini* did not experience these forms of socialisation. Additionally they were subject to the influence of urban life-styles through their migrant labour experiences, without interpreting them through the moral prisms of either 'Red' ideology, which evolved the process of 'encapsulation', or mission education.[21] As such, they developed their own form of identity which nevertheless drew upon facets of pre-colonial custom. Apart from adhering to bridewealth and property relationships, *Indlavini* also retained a strict hierarchy within each group, much as more traditionalist groupings exhibited.[22] However, discipline was much harsher, and violence for transgressions of association rules much more likely to include violence. *Indlavini* groups tended to be much more tightly knit organisations even than traditionalist 'Red' organisations. The Mayers found that rivalries between *Indlavini* associations often centred around one attempting to incorporate the other into its organisation. This contrasted with *Mtshotsho* groups in Eastern Cape areas which, although often indulging in inter-group rivalries and alliances, did not tend to completely assimilate the defeated party.[23] Thus *Indlavini* associations covered wider areas than *Mtshotsho* groups. This suggests a tighter, but larger scale identity, without the socialisation process of the Eastern Cape *Intlombe* associations which aimed at reducing tendencies to violence. This fits with the widening of concepts of identity inherent in moral ethnicity. Additionally, the *Indlavini* studied by the Mayers were the only male associations which indulged in violence against elders directly, thus partly breaking with the concepts of hierarchy and reciprocity so important to pre-colonial societies and traditionalist groupings.[24]

Later studies of the *Indlavini* confirm this tighter bonding of group identity.[25] Education and experience of compound life had caused many young men to become increasingly impatient with traditionalist groupings in Pondoland during the 1920s, resulting in the formation of *Indlavini* associations in the next decade. The development of these groups seem to reflect an increasing debate about what it meant to be Mpondo, which is directly analogous to the debate inherent in moral ethnicity. The Mayers place primary stress on cultural factors in determining these forms of reformulated masculine rural identity, and, as will be examined later, circumcision rituals in other parts of Africa could lead to increased tendencies towards violence. More emphasis on wider socio-economic factors also might have broadened their research findings. These factors are examined in more depth in later sections. However,

---

[21] See Chapters 1 and 2.

[22] P. and I. Mayer, 'Self-Organisation by Youth', Vol 2, Chapter 7. For hierarchies amongst more traditionalist associations see P. and I. Mayer, 'Self-Organisation by Youth', Vol 1, and Vol 2, Chapter 5.

[23] P. and I. Mayer, 'Self-Organisation by Youth', Vol 2, Chapter 7, p.179. Compare this to the *Mtshotsho* Eastern Cape associations in P. and I, Mayer, 'Self Organisation by Youth', Vol 1.

[24] P. and I. Mayer, 'Self-Organisation by Youth', Vol 2, Chapter 7, p.174, and p.p.195-197.

[25] W. Beinart, 'The Origins of the *Indlavini*'. This paragraph is based largely on Beinart's findings.

their unpublished research is extremely valuable, especially in terms of demonstrating that ethnic identities are not simply imposed 'from above'. Rural African agency contributed significantly to the reformulation of gendered rural ethnic identities. Similar groups to the *Indlavini* manifested themselves in other African societies during the inter-war years, such as the *amagxagxa* on various Natal farms,[26] and a wide variety of organised urban male associations arose in and around Johannesburg and Durban during the early twentieth century.[27] Similar societies were also apparent elsewhere in southern Africa.[28] Many youth groups began to lose their rural identifications in the later inter-war years,[29] but, as demonstrated by the Mayers, both the *Indlavini* and more traditionalist groupings survived into the 1960s and beyond.

The *Indlavini* began to decline in the 1960s, gradually giving way to a new male sub-culture, the *amenene*, who were far more integrated into capitalist, urban society, and were rejecting rural ethnic identifications, as well as constructing a looser form of organisation. This resulted in considerable conflict with the *Indlavini*, again demonstrating that reformulations of identity can often be the nexus for violence.[30] By the 1970s, the *Indlavini* were in serious decline, as urbanisation and wage labour undermined rural identifications based on homestead patterns of life. It seems that the *Indlavini* were a rural form of identification marking a transitional stage between rural and urban forms of consciousness, generated by the process of migrant labour. The work of the Mayers demonstrates how important cultural factors are in determining these forms of identification, and how they relate to changing forms of masculinity, ethnicity and violence. These forms of identity also seem to have a wider relevance than just the Eastern Cape and Transkei regions in early to mid-twentieth century South Africa.

8.2 Migrant Labour, Ethnic Faction Fights and The Pre-Colonial Connection.

Migrant labour, which has been fundamental in forging South African identities, is of coursenot unique to South Africa. It has been a feature of many industrialising societies, signifying a move from rural to urban life and work. However, what is unique to southern Africa is its longevity, and it is perhaps in this context that the 'uniqueness' of South Africa's economic, social and identity development becomes most apparent.[31] Proletarianisation was hindered,

---

[26] A. Vilikazi, *Zulu Transformations. A Study of the Dynamics of Social Change*, Pietermaritzburg,1965.

[27] C. Van Onselen, *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914*, Vol 2, *New Nineveh*, Johannesburg, 1982.

[28] L. Vail and L. White, *Capitalism and Colonialism in Mozambique: A Study of Quelimane District*, London, 1980.

[29] See chapter 4.

[30] M. O'Connell, 'Xesibe Reds, Rascals and Gentlemen'. Also P. and I. Mayer, 'Self-Organisation by Youth', Vol 2, Chapter 7.

[31] For a useful introductory discussion of the effects of migrant labour upon rural life see W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa*. Oxford, 1994. P.P. 25-34. There is a huge literature concerning migrant labour which is too large to reproduce here.

and rural, ethnic identities subsequently survived in a reformulated fashion. A gap was left for African people to forge their own identities in the face of labour oppression. This is the paradox of South African industrial and capitalist development, and their attendant racist ideologies. The very fact of this oppression allowed Africans to forge their own identities and retain a measure of self-worth and integrity, although this in turn hindered the development of a more inclusive nationalist consciousness.

Moodie's work which, like that of Beinart, moves beyond structural analyses and allows historical actors to speak for themselves, has focused particularly on how South African mine workers maintained a sense of self-worth in the hostile environments of the twentieth century South African gold mines.[32] He infers that crucial spaces for identity formations open up, which can manifest themselves in violent conflict, but are also available for an inclusive form of identity based on personal integrity, often centred around the upkeep of the *umzi* or homestead:

> *When life-worlds are breaking down and others have not yet been constituted to take their place, identity formations become fragmented...The potential for deeply divisive social conflict increase. In practice, however, resourceful persons create lives of integrity together as they build new life-worlds out of fragments of the old.*[33]

Beinart's life-history of 'M' further elucidates this argument. 'M', a Mpondo male who lived in the Bizana region bordering southern Natal, had received a smattering of education in his youth, but had to finish his education prematurely due to family circumstance. He thus gained employment on the Natal sugar estates around 1939/40, and from 1941 to 1947 was employed as a migrant labourer in the East Rand gold mines. It was through these jobs that 'M' became involved in *indlavini* activities. 'M's smattering of education, and his experience of migrant compound life, reflected the 'type' of youth who tended to be most attracted to these forms of group identities.

Although Beinart is cautious in relating these youth associations to a wider debate regarding the changing ethnic identities of Pondo youth, it does seem that it specifically relates to the concept of moral ethnicity espoused by Lonsdale. As 'M' became more firmly entrenched

---

Beinart's bibliography is a useful indicator for further reading. For a full periodisation of ethnic identities and 'faction fights' on mining compounds see chapter 3.

[32] See especially the following: D. Moodie and V. Ndatshe. Going *For Gold*'; 'The Moral Economy of the Black Miners' Strike of 1946'; 'Migrancy and Male Sexuality on the South African Gold Mines'; 'Social Existence and the Practice of Personal Integrity: Narratives of Resistance on the South African Gold Mines'.

[33] D. Moodie and V. Ndatshe, *Going For Gold*, P.42.

within the mining compound, he became involved with the criminal *Isitshozi* gangs which existed on the mine compounds from the 1920s to the 1940s. It is perhaps within these gangs that themes of ethnicity, 'ethnic' faction fighting, and reformulated masculinity are best exemplified. Crime and violence seem particularly important factors in the reformulations of ethnic identity on the mine compounds, especially during these years. The *Isitshotzi* seem to personify this phenomenon. Before examining their emergence however, changing concepts of male 'crime' and 'violence' in the wake of colonial capitalism need to be analysed, as they seem to provide the foundations for these reformulated identities.

A central problem in analysing violence amongst males, both in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial times centres around what is exactly considered 'violent' by the historical actors themselves. The Mpondo who, as will be illustrated below, gained a reputation for violence, belligerence and criminality on the gold mine compounds during the inter-war years, often did not necessarily conceive of themselves as violent. Moodie and Ndatshe interviewed several ex-*indlavini* and *amaqaba* ('Red') Mpondo in the late 1980s, and specifically asked them if there was any connection between their concepts of Mpondo manhood (*ubudoda)* and violence. The interviewees denied categorically that strength in combat had anything to do with *ubudoda.* Rather the essence of manhood 'had to do with competent and benevolent management of the umzi, aiding in homestead decision-making, settling disputes, and generous sharing of homestead resources with guests and visitors'.[34] Migrant labour on the mines, furthermore, was perceived as a test for true manhood, in terms of staying power, consistency, solidarity and maintaining the homestead. Beinart's studies of *Indlavini* disruptions of weddings in the 1930s and 1940s also found that the *Indlavini* did not necessarily perceive of themselves as inherently violent.[35] This relates to male socialisation processes which sanctioned controlled violence through, for example, stick-fights. 'Violence' and 'sport' seemed to merge. Novels and autobiographies of pre-colonial societies stress the socially sanctioned elements of violence inherent within them.[36] The Mayers' work examined above also illustrates the continuance of socially sanctioned violence into colonial and apartheid times.

Moodie records that both Setswana and Xhosa languages have two words for work, one for referring to working for wage labour and 'whites', and the other referring specifically to building the umzi or homestead.[37] Furthermore, the Xhosa word for 'working for whites', *pangela*, originally meant to 'seize' or 'grab'. This 'provides linguistic support for the argument that migrant labour was seen by migrants in the early years as in their interests, as a seizing of

---

[34] D. Moodie and V. Ndatshe, *Going For Gold*, P.38.
[35] W. Beinart, 'The Origins of the *Indlavini*,' P.P.118-119.
[36] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence in Southern African Historiography', P.P.469-472.
[37] D. Moodie and V. Ndatshe, *Going for Gold*, P.24.

booty to maintain their ideal existence'.[38] It also illustrates that African migrant labourers were not passive agents in the process of migrant labour, but reworked their own identities in order to accommodate their integration into the money economy. Furthermore, and following from this, it also seems reasonable to posit that, in some cases, 'criminality' may not have been perceived as such by all Africans, as they sought to define themselves within an oppressive environment. Rather, criminality could be interpreted as a way of resisting capitalist, and later apartheid, oppression.[39] Additionally, this resistance could take the form of moral ethnicity. The *Isitshotzi* can be perceived in this light, although this in no way condones the extreme forms of violence in which they indulged.

The *Isitshotzi* themselves evolved from both the mine and prison compound worlds.[40] They aimed to control allocation of jobs and sexual relationships through coercion and favours, usually consisting of stolen goods. The *Isitshotzi* also appear to have consisted mainly of Mpondo migrants, and therefore can perhaps be perceived as an organisation mobilised on an ethnicised basis in order to procure the best available living standards and opportunities in a harsh, oppressive environment, much as Sotho ethnic organisations on the mines in the first half of the twentieth century.[41] As with the *Indlavini*, the *Isitshotzi* adhered to a rigid 'moral' code. However, they differed in that they were not exclusively ethnic Mpondo based in terms of their membership, but also recruited from non-Mpondo criminals. This fact could account for the increased hierarchical nature and violence of the rural *indlavini* gangs in the 1950s, for Mpondo youth were recruited by *Isitshotzi* organisations, although there is no evidence to suggest that *Isitshotzi* culture permeated back into the rural areas, unlike the *Indlavini* culture which bridged both worlds.[42] The *Isitshotzi* could in fact be perceived as a further reformulation of Mpondo identity as men were further integrated into the mine migrant labour world. The *Isitshotzi* also bridge the gap between ethnically based compound groupings, and the emergence of urban-based, criminal, non-ethnic *tsotsi* gangs. For the opposition of other workers and mine management to the presence of *Isitshotzi* gangs, due to their tendency to participate in murder and attempts to control homosexual relationships, led increasingly to their expulsion from the mine compounds by the end of the 1930s, and their subsequent merging into the criminal 'underworld' of urban life.[43] Therefore, they may not only represent a

---

[38] Ibid.

[39] See also C. Van Onselen, 'The Regiment of the Hills-*Umkosi Wezintaba*: The Witwatersrand's Lumpenproletarian Army, 1890-1920', in C. Van Onselen, *Studies in the Economic and Social History*, Vol 2. In a series of unpublished interviews with Xhosa speaking people during the 1960s P. Qayiso-one of the Mayer's chief field work assistants-also records a very interesting response from a teacher who argues along exactly the same lines. See P. Qayiso, 'Xhosa Morality', Unpublished Paper, MS 16891/5, Cory Library, Rhodes University, p. 41.

[40] For an in-depth discussion of the emergence and decline of the *Isitshotzi* in the inter-war years see K. Breckenridge. 'Migrancy, Crime and Faction Fighting'. Also W. Beinart, 'Worker Consciousness, Ethnic Particularism and Nationalism'.

[41] See, for example, J. Guy and M. Thabane, 'Technology, Ethnicity and Ideology: Basotho Miners and Shaft-Sinking on the South African Gold Mines', *JSAS*, Vol 14, No 2, 1988.

[42] K. Breckenridge, 'Migrancy, Crime and Faction Fighting'. P.75.

[43] Ibid. P.P.75-76. Sexuality, which was and is also central to masculine concepts of ethnic identities, is analysed in chapter 7.

reformulation of ethnic identity, but also a gradual erosion of rural ethnic ties. Breckenridge argues that the *Isitshotzi* provided a worldview and structure to some Mpondo migrants. Additionally, although not all Mpondo migrants were involved in *Isitshotzi* criminal activities, 'they played an important role in shaping perceptions of the Mpondo among management, state officials and particularly other workers. When the mineworkers complained of *Isitshotzi* behaviour they did not separate them from the wider ranks of Mpondo workers'.[44] Ethnic stereotypes of Mpondos as 'wild' and 'belligerent' were thus reinforced, and led to the construction of other ethnic groupings on the mine compounds. Therefore the crime and violence perpetrated by the *Isitshotzi* can perhaps be partly viewed as a form of resistance to the oppressive and violent conditions of compound life (once the *Isitshotzi* had penetrated the compounds), albeit understood by the historical actors involved in a vague and ill-defined manner.

The process of mine management ethnic stereotyping, changes in the ethnic composition of the mine workforce, and how this contributed to ethnic faction fights have already been periodised and analysed. However, the widespread presence of male violence in both pre-colonial rural societies, on mine compounds, and (as will be analysed later) in the period of 'unrest' in the late 1980s; all of which involved ethnic identification, suggests additional causes of male violence. The link between violence and male identity would also seem to allow further insights into the linkage between 'passive', cultural ethnicities and the more politicised versions which arose from the impact of colonial capitalism. This immediately raises the questions of what exactly ethnicity is, and can 'passive' ethnicity be conceptually analysed, as the historical actors living it on a day to day basis may well not be conscious of this identity in an ethnic sense. However, if 'passive' ethnic identities are accepted as a reality in the lives of Africans, and indeed elsewhere in the world, this could perhaps go some way in explaining the male penchant for collective violent behaviour in some contexts. Furthermore, it could further elucidate the link between ethnic culture brokers of a politically tribalist bent, and the availability of people in responding positively to their divisive, conflictual message.

Migrant labourers interwove their experiences of migrant mine labour with their concepts of manhood rooted around the umzi. Songs and stories reflected this accommodation of migrant labour into male concepts of integrity. Migrant cultures 'came alive in such narratives as quests, epics of resistance to proletarianization built into the very self-formation of black mineworkers'.[45] Traditional Xhosa had rituals of departure for the mines.[46] Only with the

---

[44] Ibid. P.78.

[45] D. Moodie, *Going For Gold*, P.30.

[46] See especially the following works by P. McAllister: 'Work, Homestead and the Shades: the Ritual Interpretation of Labour Migration Among the Gcaleka', in P. Mayer (ed), *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society*, Oxford, 1980, and 'Using Ritual to Resist Domination', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, 1991.

gradual erosion of migrant labour, and the increasing proletarianisation of the mine workforce, did this form of male identity slowly disappear, and it was at this juncture that violence often broke out.[47] Indeed the Kriges, in their study of 1930s rural Lovedu society, argued that migrant labour had very little effect on the customs and culture of the Lovedu.[48] Interestingly, the Kriges observed that one of the reasons for the negligible impact of migrant labour in Lovedu culture was the pivotal role of women both in the public as well as the homestead sphere, something which did not exist in many other South African societies. This again demonstrates that different African societies responded differently in terms of cultural adjustment with the impact of migrant labour, segregation and capitalist penetration. The piecemeal urbanisation of African peoples, which continued despite the oppressive nature of apartheid policy and the attempts at 'separate development' through the 'Homelands' system, also contributed to male violence, as rural concepts of masculinity, rooted in the umzi and patriarchal relations, came under increasing threat in a fast changing socio-economic climate. Violence often became the response to this threat to rural male integrity because of male concepts of self-worth which date back before the impact of colonialism and capitalism. Indeed, concepts of male self-worth and integrity are central themes of anthropological works concerned with analysing African societies in the 1960s, and these provide interesting insights into the threat to masculine identities, the violent response to which becomes increasingly apparent, often in an ethnicised sense, during the period of insurrection throughout the 1980s.

8.3 Male Self-Worth, Gender and Morality: The Breakdown of Rural Consciousness Circa. 1950s-1970s

The challenge to concepts of self-worth originating in rural areas was becoming increasingly apparent by the 1960s. Educated and politically aware urban Africans, although in a minority, were beginning to reject rural values. However, as Kuper notes in his study of 1960s Durban, 'ideological rejection of tribal values and identification is by no means equivalent to exorcism, and there is ample evidence of the persistence of tribal divisions in intertribal situations'.[49] He refers, amongst other examples, to friction between Sotho and Zulu students at the Ohlange Institute at Inanda which resulted in violent confrontations. 'Transvaal students referred to the Natal Zulu students as *amabari* (barbarians); the Natal students retaliated with the name *osiyazi* (know-alls). Local residents apparently armed the Natal students, and, on their arrest, threatened to burn down the school'.[50] It is difficult to conceptualise this form of violence as arising from the manipulations of ethnic culture brokers. Sotho, Zulu and Xhosa also verbalised their animosity in terms of deriding each others' 'manhood'. Kuper records the

---

47 See chapter 3.

48 E.J. and J.D. Krige, *The Realm of a Rain Queen: A Study of the Pattern of Lovedu Society*, Oxford, 1965, P.323.

49 L. Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie: Race, Class and Politics in South Africa*, London, 1965, P.86.

50 Ibid, P.87.

experiences at a Presbyterian Mission School of a postgraduate student at the University of Natal, who illustrates this point:

> *The predominant group was Sotho and the groups used derogatory words about each other. Zulus used the word 'isilwane', meaning an animal, Sothos used the word 'letebele' about the Zulus. The Zulus themselves were few. The Xhosas referred to the Zulus as 'inkwenkwe', that is to say, one who has not been circumcised, or in other words, equivalent to a dog.*[51]

It is interesting to note the constant deriding of various peoples' 'manhood', and the fact that the ethnic stereotyping could often take the form of perceived rural-urban divisions. The Zulu in particular were stereotyped as ethnocentric, tribal and submissive to authority.[52] The deriding of people perceived as rural and unsophisticated took place in other areas of South Africa in the 1950s and 1960s. The Eastern Cape provides one such example. Ntsebeza refers to the bullying of rural youth by *tsotsi* gangs in East London in the 1950s. This provoked two differing responses from the former. They either totally refused to integrate into urban areas, reinforcing ties to rural bases and remaining within their own circle of 'home-friends',[53] or they became like the *tsotsis* themselves, often becoming more violent than the originals.[54] This suggests a reformulation of 'manhood' in two senses; either reinforcing rural concepts of masculinity rooted in the umzi ('selective traditionalism') which bases itself on considerable restraint in refusing integration into urban life, or a complete liberation from this way of life by taking up the life of a *tsotsi.* As Ntsebeza notes, this latter approach is marked by an exaggeration of violence, as if the young men involved have to prove their 'manhood' by outdoing their new companions. Although this does not relate directly to ethnic violence, there are parallels. As I have already argued, the socialisation process of rural Xhosa is integral to a 'passive' cultural ethnic identity, and the abandonment of this identity, at least in this example, was marked by a violent transformation. This is also reflected in the various reformulations of masculine identities in rural areas at different times - such as the *Indlavini* and *amenene.* It seems that reformulations of rural masculinities (due to migrant labour and the disjointed manner in which urban values gradually permeated), often rooted in cultural ethnic identities, play a major part in ethnic, and other forms, of male dominated violence. This is also apparent in the violent conflicts which erupted in the 1980s/90s.

---

[51] Ibid, P.P.86-87.
[52] Ibid, P.88.
[53] See P. Mayer, *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, Esp. chap. 5.
[54] L. Ntsebeza, *Youth in Urban African Townships*, P.P.30-48.

Generational tensions and crises in masculinity were a continual occurrence throughout the twentieth century, as outlined above. Qayiso found that many of his Xhosa respondents made indirect references to the erosion of perceived notions of masculinity in the early 1960s. His interview with a 67 year old 'Red' Xhosa male is particularly illuminating, demonstrating as it does the deep sense of loss with respect to the erosion of patriarchal authority:

> *My wife should not know all my thoughts because as soon as she knows what I 'think' (my personality) she will 'lawula' (rule or control) me. It was never meant that a woman should rule a man. That never happened in the times of our forbears. I have no 'ubuncoko' (holding conversations) with a woman when I am at home. 'Ubuncoko' (holding conversations) with women makes them despise you.*[55]

Hammond-Tooke's general overview of Southern African peoples' moral universes expounds upon this perceived need for social distance between men and women:

> *The importance of lineage solidarity is reflected in the husband -wife relationship. It is somehow thought wrong for a man to be too closely involved with his wife, as this may conflict with his loyalty to his kinsmen. Husband and wife do not spend their leisure time together (men and women are segregated at beer drinks and other functions) and a man who walks beside his spouse or shows too much affection for her in public is suspected of being bewitched. This cluster of moral prescriptions...is based on the values of kin solidarity and fertility.*[56]

Qayiso's respondent continues with a comparison between male values of his time and those of former times, linking the differences to the contraction of the homestead:

> *They were ever carrying weapons and women would never dream of ruling their husbands then. The homesteads of today are no longer as big as they used to be then, when any man who appeared to be under the petticoat government would be rebuked thus: why don't you thrash this woman? In those days*

---

[55] P. Qayiso, 'Xhosa Morality', P.47.

[56] W. D. Hammond-Tooke. 'World-View Two: A System of Action', in W.D. Hammond-Tooke (ed), *The Bantu-speaking Peoples of Southern Africa*, London, 1974. For an in-depth analysis of how 'Red' and 'School' Xhosa differed in their approaches to increasing (if severely circumscribed) opportunities for female independence (itself a result of migrant labour processes) see P. Mayer's *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, passim.

> *there would be a number of men with their wives living together in the same homestead. Today things are different. The wife knows how to rule her husband.*[57]

The patriarchal authority which men enjoyed in the pre-colonial extended homestead was thus disappearing, and this caused a crisis of masculinity for older males. Moreover, the economic precariousness of the homestead in the 1960s - due to the discriminatory measures of the apartheid government and the process of migrant labour - not only undermined male authority and modified male roles, but also boosted up the independence of their sons to the extent that the position of older males became economically insecure within the homestead itself. Qayiso's above respondent elaborates:

> *If today you should sell a beast without consulting your wife first, she might report you to her sons and tell them that you are finishing the stock. Sometimes the stock or some of it belongs to the sons and if you do not want to listen and heed their advice, they might tell you never to touch it again without their knowledge. If the father ignores this warning the sons would tell him 'siya kukavalela ngendlala' (literally, we will shut you up in starvation) in this homestead. They would leave the father and build up their own homesteads, and since the father sold most of the stock he would be left with nothing with which to plough the fields when they take the stock away. The wife might elect to live with the son she loves best. Every man fears this because they might even stop sending him money but leave him to suffer.*[58]

Male grievances and anger are very apparent in Qayiso's interviews, and are also readily perceived in published anthropological studies emanating from the same period. Berglund, whose work is based on a study of a particular Zulu rural community in the late 1950s/early 1960s, argues that themes of male anger, fertility and restraint/control provide key concepts for gaining an understanding of the thinking of rural Zulu men.[59] For example, he argues that the Zulu are unanimous 'that the power of fertility is a very great power in a man. Because of its potency and exalted position in society it has to be controlled..."If it is let loose it can kill a man"'.[60] Furthermore anger, like fertility, is argued to be perceived by Zulu as 'innate to the

---

[57] P. Qayiso, 'Xhosa Morality', MS 16891/5. P.48.

[58] Ibid. P.P. 49-50. Many other male respondents to Qayiso's interviews, especially from 'Red' Xhosa communities, expressed similar grievances.

[59] A. Berglund, *Zulu Thought Patterns and Symbolism*, London, 1976.

[60] Ibid, p.254.

lineage and clan, and peculiar to each individual member of the lineage. Like fertility, the power which expresses itself in anger is a characteristic of men. "If men did not have anger, they would not be men" '.[61] According to Berglund, the perceived power inherent in fertility and anger entailed the need for strict social rules and regulations, for example the regulation of sexual relations. This enabled the perceived 'primordial' characteristics to be controlled.[62] The Mayers' work on male socialisation processes in the Eastern Cape during the 1960s made similar findings, their oral informants arguing that young men are aggressive by instinct, and that socialisation processes are required to channel these emotions.

> *Xhosa hold that boys are naturally pugnacious, 'like dogs', and 'always like to settle things by the stick'. To that extent (they suggest) boyish fights and battles are to be tolerantly ignored, within very broad limits...However, with the attainment of manhood the fighting urge is supposed to be sublimated...Adults expounding on the merits of youth organisations seldom forgot to mention that umshotsho stick playing is good, 'inter alia', because it allows boys to exhaust their natural urge to fight.*[63]

Themes of man-hood, anger, restraint and sexuality were central to many rural African communities during the 1950s and 1960s, as indeed they were throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Circumcision rituals and socialisation processes played a part in channelling these emotions through marking the entry into a particular constructed concept of man-hood, as illustrated above. However, these rituals could exacerbate violent tendencies as well. In her study of the Gisu of East Africa, Heald comments that Gisu pre-colonial ethnic identity was centred around their concept of man-hood, which itself was indistinguishable from the ritual of male circumcision.[64] This particular articulation between masculinity, ethnic identity and circumcision remained at the time of her study in the 1960s. Heald relates these socialisation processes to the widespread reputation of the Gisu for violence. She specifically refers to the Gisu concept of *lirima.*[65] This is perceived as a pre-eminently manly quality, and manifests itself as a violent emotion which overwhelms a man and can become uncontrollable. Heald stresses the contradictory liberatory and restraining elements of rural Gisu society, elements which are often involved in ethnic violence.

---

[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid, p.p.258-270.
[63] P. and I. Mayer, 'Self-Organisation by Youth', Vol 1, p.55.
[64] S. Heald, *Controlling Anger: The Sociology of Gisu Violence*, Manchester, 1989, p.p.18-19. Also see S. Heald, 'The Ritual Use of Violence: Circumcision among the Gisu of Uganda', in D. Riches (ed), *The Anthropology of Violence*, Oxford, 1986.
[65] S. Heald, *Controlling Anger*, Chapter 3, and S. Heald, 'The Ritual Use of Violence', passim.

> *For the Gisu, who do not think of reason and emotion as opposed modalities embattled within the personality, 'lirima' can not only be volitional but an aspect of the control a man should assert over himself and the world, a quality or capacity to be mustered by the individual to achieve or serve his purposes. If a man can be in the grip of 'lirima' he can use it to steel himself too. In this way 'lirima' not only has negative but also forceful and positive connotations, the force behind that strength of character which makes men courageous and determined.*[66]

Furthermore, *lirima* was found to be central to the overcoming of fear of the circumcision ritual, as it is at this time that boys are perceived to first display this emotion. Heald states that thereafter the emotion is 'as much a part of his manhood as the circumcision cuts themselves'.[67]

There are interesting comparisons and contrasts to be made between Gisu concepts of anger, manhood and the perpetration of violence, and those of South African communities, such as the Zulu and Mpondo. Mpondo males had gained a reputation for violent behaviour on mine compounds through the course of the twentieth century.[68] A recent research project which explored the connections between Mpondo conceptions of manhood and violence, found that older men, whether *indlavini* or traditionalist, strongly denied that strength in combat had anything to do with manhood.[69] Rather it centred around the competent management of the umzi, or homestead, settling disputes amicably and sharing resources with guests. 'The mines were a testing ground for true manhood, manifested in presiding over a rural homestead'.[70] Similarly the Gisu, whose communities exhibited a high percentage of individual male violence in the 1960s, did not conceive of violence as a positive statement of the achievement of manhood. At the end of the circumcision rituals, elders strictly admonished initiates to use their adult status to upkeep their homestead wisely, and not to indulge in violent behaviour.[71] Ritual admonishments in southern African communities during the 1960s and after reflected similar concerns.[72]

---

[66] S. Heald, *Controlling Anger*, p.59.
[67] Ibid, p.60.
[68] See above. Also D. Moodie, 'Ethnic Violence on South African Gold Mines'.
[69] D. Moodie, *Going For Gold*, p.37. The references to Mpondo men in the rest of this section draws heavily on this work.
[70] Ibid, p.38.
[71] S. Heald, 'The Ritual Use of Violence', p.81.
[72] For example see the following: P. and I. Mayer, 'Socialisation by Peers: The Youth Organisation of the Red Xhosa'; P. McAllister, 'Using Ritual to Resist Domination in the Transkei', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition.*

Many Gisu were very concerned about the prevalence of individual violence and murder within their communities, but approached it in terms of an almost fatalistic acceptance. 'After a murder a commonly voiced sentiment was not just that the killer was a bad man but that the Gisu were just bad people and what could one do? This capacity for violence is attributed to *lirima*.'[73] As has been demonstrated, Zulu, Xhosa and Mpondo rural communities in the 1960s also linked the capacity for male anger and violence to inherent biological and psychological traits.[74]

Nevertheless, there are contrasts between these communities. Both Zulu and Mpondo men do not circumcise, and yet migrant labourers from both ethnic communities gained a reputation for collective violence through the course of the twentieth century.[75] It is also interesting that Mpondo men argued that anger was not an inherent part of their conception of man-hood, in complete contrast to Berglund's respondents.[76] It is therefore worth exploring psychological factors, and how these may have linked up with changing socialisation processes, themselves set within a changing socio-economic context.

8.4 Psychology, Male Violence and Ethnicised Consciousness.

Fanon's concept of a Manichean psychology underlying human violence and oppression provides some theoretical insights into the nature of violence and ethnicised consciousness, despite being primarily concerned with the development of a violent anti-colonial nationalism. Fanon argues that the presence of the 'coloniser' in the land of the 'colonised', and the oppressive rule of the former over the latter, produces a Manichean psychology which buttresses colonial rule through psychological oppression. Everything is divided into dichotomised opposites, to the advantage of the coloniser, and the disadvantage of the colonised. This duality permeates the very value systems of both. 'The oppressor identifies himself in terms of the sublime and beauty while depicting the oppressed in terms of absolute evil and ugliness...On his part the oppressed assumes his role in the Manichean psychology thrust upon him'.[77] However, this acceptance of psychological oppression hides an underlying

---

[73] S. Heald, 'The Ritual Use of Violence', p.73.

[74] It is interesting that both the Gisu studied by Heald, and the Zulu studied by Berglund, located the seat of anger and violent emotions in the throat ('The Ritual Use of Violence', p.71, *Zulu Thought Patterns*, p.p.255-256). Berglund found that death by strangling was therefore considered a very serious offence, due to the fact that, because anger was inherent in a man, it was a direct attack on his human dignity.

[75] See chapter 5 for an examination of the significance of tha lack of circumcision in terms of shaping male Zulu identity, and its possible connections to outbreaks of ethnicised collective violence.

[76] This differentiation may partially be due to differences in interviewing techniques between Moodie and Ndatshe on the one hand, and Berglund and his assistants on the other. However, the difference is striking, and illustrates the diverse array of constructed rural masculinities amongst black South Africans.

[77] H. Bulhan, *Frantz Fanon and the Psychology of Oppression*, London, 1985, p.141. The key text in which Fanon develops this theory is *The Wretched of the Earth*, New York, 1965. This chapter is primarily concerned with the explanatory value of Fanon's theory regarding the relationship between male violence and ethnicised consciousness. Readers are advised to consult the latter text for the wider context of Fanon's work on violence and nationalism.

violent rage amongst the colonised, which is denied an outlet due to the dominance of the colonial power. The self-worth of the colonised is undermined through this process of psychological dehumanisation, and results in the eruption of violence within the community of the colonised, being the only available outlet for pent-up resentment and aggression.

> *The settler keeps alive in the native an anger which he deprives of outlet; the native is trapped in the tight links of the chains of colonialism. but...inwardly the settler can only achieve a pseudo-petrification. The native's muscular tension finds outlet regularly in bloodthirsty explosions - in tribal warfare, in feuds between sects, and in quarrels between individuals.*[78]

Fanon refers to this form of violent psychological release as 'displaced aggression'. This has some theoretical value in terms of explaining the outbreak of ethnic faction fights on mine compounds, and in rural and urban areas. For mine management and colonial administrators did attempt to manipulate identities in order to perpetrate colonial rule and ensure a quiescent labour force. However, as has also been demonstrated, violence did not originate solely from the imposition of colonialism. Pre-colonial African communities were no strangers to violent behaviour, and channelled forms of violence were part of many African male socialisation processes, which in turn shaped particular forms of collective rural identities. Fanon can also be criticised for assuming that anti-colonial nationalism was an inevitable end stage in societal development. Nevertheless, his concept of the potential liberatory aspects of violence offers potential insights into the relationship between ethnicised consciousness, the breakdown of rural identities, and male violence.

As has been illustrated, the reformulation of male socialisation processes, in rural, compound and urban areas, were often marked by (sometimes partially condoned) outbreaks of violent behaviour in the first half of the twentieth century. Structural economic, political and social change were intrinsic to these outbreaks, but this does not in itself completely explain why violence, often in an ethnicised form, occurred. The threat to self-worth, stressed by Fanon and implied in the examples above, allows a deeper analysis which takes into account the psychological upheavals of these changes, especially in the context of the threat to rural forms of masculine identity. Horowitz similarly emphasises the importance of self-worth in shaping ethnic conflict. He dismisses the argument, posited by Marxist historians of the 1970s, that it was simply the result of manipulations by elites intent on pursuing their own political

---

[78] F. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, p.43.

agendas.[79] Rather, the threat to self-worth emanating from a dominant ethnic group entails an erosion of self-esteem amongst the non-dominant group, and an introspective questioning by the latter concerning their moral code and world-view.

> *Since the individual sense of identity is the feeling of being a worthy person because he fits into a coherent and valued order of things, ego identity depends heavily on affiliations. A threat to the value of those affiliations produces anxiety and defense. For this reason, people often express hostility towards those who create uncertainty about the correctness of their own behaviour and that of the groups to which they belong, and they often do so out of all proportion to the character of the threat that presently confronts them.*[80]

This can be applied in a qualified manner to the proliferation of rural identities examined above, themselves an example of the moral ethnic debate. Although the communities did not respond 'out of all proportion to the character of the threat' to their identities, the growth of different male associations, themselves a reformulation of ethnic identities, were marked by violence and conflict, as people increasingly debated the value of their moral universes in the face of colonial and capitalist penetration.

Horowitz also connects this concept of violent conflict, emanating from cultural rather than political factors, to the political realm.

> *If the need to feel worthy is a fundamental human requirement, it is satisfied in considerable measure by belonging to groups that are in turn regarded as worthy. Like individual self-esteem, collective self-esteem is achieved largely by social recognition. Everywhere, but especially in developing countries, where the sphere of politics is unusually broad and its impact powerful, collective social recognition is conferred by political affirmation. For this reason, struggles over relative group worth are readily transferred to the political system.*[81]

---

[79] See chapter 2.
[80] D. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, London, 1985, p.181.
[81] Ibid, p.185.

Social identity theory, a branch of social psychology developed in the 1970s, also suggests that people need to identify with a group or collectivity in order to meet their needs and increase their self-esteem. Membership of these groups shapes and limits the behavioural options of its individual members, providing 'recipes for living'.[82]

This can be related to the politicised political tribalism which became increasingly apparent amongst black communities as the twentieth century progressed. As patriarchal authority and institutions such as the chieftaincy were central to many pre-colonial societies, and the chieftaincy itself was manipulated first by colonial administrators and later by apartheid social engineers, their symbolism became increasingly important in terms of representing the moral order of the communities concerned within a more specifically political arena. This may have suited the agendas of political elites and institutionalised racism, but it also resonated with the requirements and fears of those who were facing severe challenges to their moral order and way of life. Reformulated identities which earlier in the twentieth century hardly distinguished between the cultural and the political were now becoming increasingly politicised. Patriarchal authority was being more comprehensively challenged, and the anger and resentment felt by men was becoming more conspicuous.

The erosion of the rural patriarchal order, and the consequent rising resentment amongst mainly rural migrant men, seems to have had a considerable effect on male constructed gender roles. Mpondo men interviewed in 1988 perceived man-hood and woman-hood in markedly different ways, and these differences were divided in terms of generation.[83] Older Mpondo men, who had worked as migrant labourers in the gold mines during the mid-twentieth century, agreed that *ubododa* (the Mpondo concept of the essence of man-hood, centred around the upkeep of the umzi) could also be inherent in women. This reflected the fact that many women in this period looked after the rural homesteads in the absence of husbands working on the mines. These older men still believed in patriarchal authority, but as they defined man-hood morally rather than biologically, there was no contradiction in the argument that women could possess *ubododa.* However, the gradual proletarianisation of the workforce, together with the massive resettlement schemes of the 1960s and the growth of rural slums, meant that women found it nearly impossible to upkeep the umzi. They became increasingly reliant on men's wages, and the complementary gender roles of earlier generations were eroded.

(F)or the present generation of Mpondo, maleness and female-

---

[82] D. Abrams and M. Hogg, *Social Identity Theory: Constructive and Critical Advances*, London, 1990. The term 'recipes for living' is drawn from C. Campbell, 'Learning to Kill? Masculinity, the Family and Violence in Natal', *JSAS*, Vol 18, No 3, 1992, p.615.

[83] This section is based on D. Moodie, *Going For Gold*, p.p.37-41

> *ness have been dichotomized again. The suggestion that women might have ubododa is categorically denied, if not ridiculed..Ubododa ...denoted biological maleness and ubufazi (womanhood) biological femaleness.*[84]

Divisions were thus occurring in both gender and generational terms, but within a new context of increasing proletarianisation. The proliferation of fluid, processual identities (moral ethnicity) which emerged from the migrant labour process were being eroded. This could produce a longing for a return of the moral code of past rural communities amongst older men, and a greater potential for support of ethnic entrepreneurs of a politically tribalist bent. The anger and frustration produced amongst older men, who adhered to remnants of old value systems and identities which were being increasingly challenged, could result in domestic and ethnicised violence, as the next section explores. Psychological analyses seem to offer useful insights into this aspect of ethnicised consciousness.

8.5 Masculinity, Ethnicised Conflict and the Demise of the Apartheid State

The 1984-6 insurrections, the rise of the UDF and opposing right-wing vigilantes, and the eventual demise of the apartheid state signalled a new stage in terms of violent conflict in South Africa. Outbreaks of violence in Natal from the mid-1980s onwards have been responsible for the deaths of approximately 6000 people, and these conflicts transferred themselves to the industrial heartland of the Rand in the early 1990s where, in July and August 1990, more than 500 Africans were killed in a matter of days. Although the responsibility for these events remains an area of debate, 'it seems clear that *Inkatha* supporters, mobilised around a specific Zulu ethnic identity, have been the source of most of the aggression'.[85] The fomenting of violence by elements in the army and police is now beyond question, and the reification of Zulu militarism and political tribalist tendencies of ethnic culture brokers such as Mangosuthu Buthelezi were also indispensable elements in this mass suffering. However, these two elements alone do not explain why people were available for perpetrating these atrocities. Chapter four has explored the social, economic and political elements which contributed to the mobilisation of peoples towards violence, but these explanations in themselves also fall short of a complete explanation of why people (mostly men) partake in these extreme forms of violence. An approach which examines the

---

[84] Ibid, p.41.

[85] S. Marks. 'The Origins of Ethnic Violence in South Africa', in N. Etherington (ed), *Peace, Politics and Violence in the New South Africa*, London, 1992, P.122.

psychological threat to male concepts of masculinity seems to offer further explanatory insights. This in turn relates to male socialisation processes.[86]

Campbell has recently explored the connections between changing gender and generational relationships in working class Zulu families and the tendency of older males to support the more violent activities of *Inkatha*. Drawing on the discipline of social psychology, and especially social identity theory, she argues that older males were losing their 'traditional' authority in the family and in the community - twin pivots of masculine identity, as illustrated above - and were seeking to replace it through affiliating with *Inkatha*.[87] In tandem with the findings of radical historians in the 1970s and 1980s, Campbell refers to the fact that apartheid and capitalism limited the power of working class men in the wider community, but they still retained power within the family. However, increasing unemployment and low wages were leading to the undermining of their socially defined role as breadwinner by the 1980s, and Campbell found that women and young members of the family tended to look down upon men who were unable to provide for the family by their income alone. Furthermore young people were increasingly dominating community decision making and the shaping of community opinion, a role previously the sole preserve of older males.

This was not a phenomenon exclusive to Zulu people, or indeed to the 1980s. Campbell's 1980s study transfers this crisis in masculinity onto a more specifically urban context. Here, with the nuclear family becoming more and more the norm, and rural ties being further eroded, the challenge to prior patriarchal relationships is even more pronounced. It is also more specifically class based, with more and more Africans relying solely on wage labour at a time of increasing unemployment and poverty. Campbell's use of social identity theory leads her to conclude that there were three ways that men sought to reassert themselves in this particular period of crisis in masculinity. Some older men sought doggedly to reassert their authority and what they believed were their rights in the family by recourse to domestic violence; others withdrew from their family and sought to reassert their 'manhood' through extra-marital affairs and heavy drinking (although this behaviour was not confined to the 1980s. Similar tendencies were apparent among men many decades before); thirdly, (as stated above) and directly relevant to the violence in 1980s Natal, she argues that the behavioural option of violence 'as a socially sanctioned "recipe for living"' opened up opportunities for a reassertion of male dominance. 'The opening up of the political arena to grassroots working class people, particularly over the last five years, has created an important space for the reassertion of male dominance via the current emphasis on violence as a means of solving political conflicts'.[88]

---

[86] There are of course many other examples of ethnicised violence in this period which did/do not involve the Zulu Inkatha movement. However, an examination of Zulu male concepts of masculinity seem to offer a particularly rich field in exploring male tendencies to violent behaviour in an ethnicised sense.

[87] C. Campbell. 'Learning to Kill? Masculinity, the Family and Violence in Natal', *JSAS*, Vol 18, No 3, 1992.

[88] C. Campbell. 'Masculinity, the Family and the Current Natal Violence', P.623.

Due to the ahistorical nature of Campbell's article she does not fully explore the reasons why violence so readily became an option for masculine reassertion in a particular historical context, only referring briefly to the fact that social science literature often refers to the role of male socialisation processes in the family as contributing to male tendencies to violence.[89] However, the socialisation processes referred to above, which span the entire twentieth century, demonstrate that reformulated socially sanctioned male violence was very much a part of African societies. There is a vast primary source literature which refers to the prevalence of masculine socially sanctioned violence, often towards women, in pre-colonial, and early colonial, southern African societies (although these have to be read with caution, containing as they do the ingrained prejudices of the mostly European authors who, as mentioned above, often portrayed Africans as intrinsically violent and 'barbaric').[90] However, this is only part of the story. Moodie's theoretical conceptualisation of migrant labourers' concepts of male integrity and self-worth brings out the very different ways that male and female roles were conceptualised in rural African societies compared to 'westernised' individualist and feminist approaches to the subject. This is not to reduce the argument to a cultural relativist standpoint, nor is it to condone the violence perpetrated by some African men towards some African women. Rather, it is to demonstrate that gender relationships were understood in a different idiom to that of industrialised societies, and that this relationship was central to the formation of masculine and feminine identities, subsequently being both threatened and reinforced by male and female socialisation processes. As mentioned earlier, many migrant labourers centred their identity in the first half of the twentieth century largely around 'building the umzi'. Women were an indispensable element in the perpetuation of these concepts of manhood, for they looked after the umzi in the absence of male migrant labourers. Thus male constructions of masculinity and femininity were centred around cultural, not biological factors.

This reciprocal, if patriarchal, relationship seems to have broken down with the gradual erosion of migrant labour, and the increasing reliance upon permanent wage labour, in the second half of the twentieth century. Women and young men took advantage of this erosion of rural patriarchal values, and this is particularly evident in the attitudes towards education. Brandel-Syrier found that mothers were central figures in encouraging their sons to continue in

---

[89] Ibid. P.625.

[90] 'Cetshwayo's Evidence', especially pages 65-72, provides a useful insight into the socially sanctioned violence towards women in the late nineteenth century Zulu state. The evidence of John Kumalo, in C. Webb and J. Wright *The James Stuart Archive of Recorded Oral Evidence Relating to the History of the Zulu and Neighbouring Peoples, Vol. 1*, Pietermaritzburg, 1976, is also particularly illuminating in this respect. Also see A. Booth. ' "European Courts Protect Women and Witches": Colonial Law Courts as Redistributers of Power in Swaziland 1920-1950', *JSAS*, Vol 18, No 2, 1992. Booth's article is also useful in demonstrating the ambiguous nature of womens' position in Swaziland as pre-colonial patriarchal controls were challenged only to be replaced by new constraints.

education in her study of elite African groups in the Rand in the 1960s.[91] She argued that mothers were major figures 'in the break-up of tribal life and the main progressive force which pushed the next generation into modern twentieth-century life'.[92] Campbell notes that older married women had different attitudes to the more politicised youth in 1980s Natal than did older married men:

> *While older married women (mothers) also referred to inter-generational tensions, they did not appear to be as threatened by the younger generation as their male counterparts. Some mothers even expressed veiled pride for the boldness and assertiveness of their teenage offspring. Overall the growing assertiveness of the youth is much less stressful for older women who were not socialised to expect to play dominant roles (in the family or in the broader community) in the way that their husbands were.*[93]

This suggests that women's support for the erosion of older rural, patriarchal identities cut across classes, as Brandel-Syrier's study was concerned with what could be considered middle classes and Campbell's piece was concerned with working class communities. Education and Christianity were central catalysts in this endeavour.[94]

This again raises the importance of status, self-worth and integrity in South African peoples' identity formation, and how these integrate with other forms of identity such as class and nationalism. King Goodwill Zwelithini, referring to Zulu violence in Natal in July 1990, demonstrates the importance of (often male) concepts of self-worth in contributing to ethnicised violence: 'Everything Zulu is being ridiculed. Our cultures are now being torn apart...the Hlobane violence was triggered off by Cosatu members who stated that when ...Nelson Mandela was released, my uncle...and I would be his cook and waiter respectively'.[95] It is not hard to discern how this resonated with older working class Zulu men who were seeing their own patriarchal forms of authority being eroded. 'An escape into a mythical past of pride and success in battle provides the dignity that most of the hostel dwellers and

---

[91] M. Brandel-Syrier, *Reeftown Elite*, P.P.234-241. There is a connection between this tendency and the role of mothers in earlier, more rural, situations - for the role of women in socialising children and young people seems of central importance in constructing identities, including ethnic ones. See Chapter 7.

[92] Ibid. P.235.

[93] C. Campbell, 'Masculinity, the Family and the Current Natal Violence', P.620.

[94] Afrikaner women displayed similar tendencies in supporting educational reforms, and in reformulating Afrikaner ethnic identity, in the first half of the twentieth century. See J. Butler. 'Afrikaner women and the Creation of Ethnicity in a Small South African Town, 1902-1950', in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism in Twentieth Century South Africa.* Virginia Van Der Vliet also explores Xhosa women's attempts to erode older concepts of patriarchy in the institution of marriage in contemporary times. See her article 'Traditional Husbands, Modern Wives? Constructing Marriages in a South African Township', in *Tradition and Transition.*

[95] H. Adam and H. Moodley, 'Political Violence, "Tribalism" and Inkatha', *JMAS*, Vol 30, No 1, 1992. P.501.

unemployed migrants have lacked'.[96] Of course, support for *Inkatha* did not only emanate from older working class male and elite male culture brokers. Some Zulu women and young men also supported *Inkatha* policies and the often attendant violence for various reasons. These included the threat to older forms of culture, the very real material gains in terms of jobs that could be gained by supporting *Inkatha* and the appeal to young men of *Inkatha's* rhetoric regarding martial prowess and Zulu identity.[97] The interpretation of the violence in Natal as primarily a conflict between a Zulu-based *Inkatha* movement and an allegedly Xhosa dominated ANC serves to mask a proliferation of evolving and declining cultural groupings, in competition with each other in a time of rapid socio-economic change.[98]

The demise of the apartheid state allowed these competing sub-cultures more political prominence, creating a space for violent conflict. It is a paradox of recent South African history that the demise of the National party-with all its attendant violence towards Africans both in institutional and every-day forms-should have initiated a new era of male-dominated violence, although this has to some degree subsided.

8.6 Male Socialisation, Collective Violence and Ethnic Identity: Some Theoretical Reflections

In a recent study of male collective violence in South Africa, Crais stresses the need for 'a history of the multiple sites of political imagining, the hidden arenas within which society and polity is made and remade in thought, conversation and action.'[99] It is in the often trivial day-to-day interactions between people that the structure of larger society is wrought. Culture is central to this, embodying as it does socialisation processes which produce the moral universes to which people adhere for meaning in life. This of course interacts with political economy, but it is too simplistic to argue, as many radical historians and other academics did with regard to South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s, that structural processes shape peoples' consciousnesses in a passive sense. People reinterpreted these structural impositions in order to forge their own, new, identities in a fast-changing socio-economic climate. Central to these formations were-and are-male concepts of integrity, self-worth and prestige. These values were very much tied to the homestead in pre-colonial Southern African societies, but were not completely eradicated by the penetration of colonialism and the capitalist economy. This provided fertile ground for the growth of moral ethnicities, rooted in a threatened, but still strong, rural patriarchal order.

---

[96] Ibid.

[97] S. Marks, Personal Interview, May 1996.

[98] S. Marks, 'The Origins of Ethnic Violence', P.P.127-8. Why Zulu ethnic identifications should be the most prominent in terms of ethnic violence in this period is the subject of chapter 5.

[99] C. Crais, 'Of Men, Magic and the Law: Masculinity, Violence and the Imagination in South Africa', Unpublished Paper, Personal Copy, P.33.

As has been demonstrated, men in southern African societies were often socialised to participate in socially sanctioned violence. However, it was not necessarily perceived as 'violent' by the historical actors involved-rather, it was one aspect of 'man-hood' which was centred around the umzi or homestead. The impact of colonialism and capitalism involved successive 'crises of integration' for males, as patriarchal authority began to be challenged. Nevertheless, this often resulted in violent reformulations of patriarchal authority, rather than a complete erosion. The examples of the differing youth associations mentioned above seem to be prime indicators of these reformulations.

Identities spring from people's core experiences, but not from any primordial 'essence'. They are constructed around concepts of self-worth which are informed by people's perspectives of a narrow or broader locality. Migrant labourers, often identifying themselves in an ethnic sense, could integrate these identities within a broader, more inclusive identification with the mineworker's union.[100] However, conflicts over definitions of identity 'are often violent. At the personal level this stems from the hurt felt when an outsider has the power to define identity in ways which deny the individual's own expert knowledge, composed as it is of core experiences, desires and yearnings and strategic plans for life'.[101] Perceived psychological threats to, often male dominated, ethnic identity and status do seem to be of prime importance in instigating collective, ethnicised; violence.

This certainly offers a partial explanation of the conflicts between differing male youth associations, each one an example of reformulated masculinity. They also represent the debate inherent in moral ethnicity, as each one represented a version of what it meant to be Mpondo, Zulu, Xhosa etc (although they did not all necessarily entail an identity reformulation in an ethnic sense). Each of these reformulations threatened the 'correctness' of the world view offered by the previous group. Education was a significant factor in instigating these reformulations, as it entailed a wider choice of identities in which people-especially men-could plan strategic life choices.

These moral ethnic debates could, however, also degenerate into political tribalism. The manipulations of the apartheid state, and the deliberate creation of ethnic culture brokers, entailed a hardening of these fluid, if somewhat violent, male-dominated ethnicised boundaries. However, this imposition of ethnic identities from above had to resonate with the bulk of the people 'below'. Again, it seems the very threat to older forms of masculinity and ethnic identity centred in the moral ethnic debate actually contributed to the reinforcement of

---

100 D. Moodie, *Going For Gold*, Esp. the conclusion. Also W. Beinart, 'Worker Consciousness, Ethnic Particularism and Nationalism'.

101 F. Wilson and B.F. Frederiksen (eds), *Ethnicity, Gender and the Subversion of Nationalism*, London, 1995. P.2.

these crystallisations of ethnic identity. Buthelezi's version of 'Zuluness', for example, could resonate with the threat to older working class males' concepts of masculinity due to both the poverty arising from apartheid ideology and the fluctuating cheap labour requirements of modern capitalism, and the perceived threat emanating from a more radical agenda often captured by young men who no longer adhered to concepts of reciprocity, respect and patriarchal authority.[102]

The customs adhered to by pre-colonial societies seem to have imposed such a hegemonic hold upon the psyches of the community members that they were often taken for granted as an unquestioned, natural way of life (much as in 'passive' forms of ethnic identity). Thus they provided the pillars of support needed for people to interpret their moral universe. With the impact of colonialism, capitalism and the oppression wrought by apartheid these moral universes were increasingly questioned and identities redefined. In an ethnic sense this represents the moral ethnic debate. However, this fluid processual form of identity reformulation could be transformed by culture brokers and the apartheid state by invoking calls to a 'lost past' and traditional values. The uncertainties and psychological insecurities inherent in change, whilst also offering the chance for ethnic identities to reformulate and breakdown, were ossified by these elements. People were available for this crystallisation of identities due to the fact that their life world was increasingly insecure in a fast-changing socio-economic climate. Class, gender, ethnic and other forms of affiliation were all being reformulated and people need something 'solid' with which to identify.

Thus these identity reformulations were marked by-often ethnicised-violence. Men were both socialised to carry out the political matters appertaining to the community, and in terms of 'warrior' status in pre-colonial societies. As these elements were central to concepts of rural manhood, they remained central elements in reformulated ethnic identities throughout the twentieth century, as is especially evidenced by youth associations. As each stage challenged previous concepts of 'manhood' and ethnic identity, there were inevitable violent episodes. This violence can be perceived as liberatory in content, in that it represented a debate regarding how best ethnic identities-in a male dominated environment-could be reformulated in order to adjust to the rapid social and economic changes introduced. Therefore it reflects Fanon's concept of the liberatory elements of violence. Combined with the fact that socially sanctioned violence was a central element to many pre-colonial forms of society, it is perhaps not surprising that identity reformulations-which could be extremely hurtful to people as their whole way of life was being questioned-were often marked by violent confrontations, as people sought to redefine who they were. The restraining element of

---

[102] Patriarchal authority in this context refers to the particular concept of 'manhood' to which older working class men adhered. Younger men were just as prone to patriarchal concepts of authority, but in a different sense, as Campbell's article bears out.

violence is best evidenced in the crystallised forms of political tribalism, invoked by first British colonialism, then the apartheid state, but also by intellectual culture brokers from among black South African communities. The longevity of the migrant labour process provided the ideal milieu for these identity reformulations to take place, as it allowed older, rural forms of ethnic identity (and thus male concepts of self-worth) to reformulate and adjust to the changes wrought. However, this also hindered the development of broader, more inclusive identities and allowed the transforming of the processual forms of ethnic identity inherent in moral ethnicity by the various and varied proponents of political tribalism, whether in terms of their own class or ethnic interests.

9. ETHNICITY AND NATIONALISM: DIFFERING PATHS TO MODERNITY IN TWENTIETH CENTURY SOUTH AFRICA

The global resurgence of ethnic and nationalist affiliations in the late twentieth century is now rivalled by the plethora of multi-disciplinary academic literature analysing the phenomena.[1] Definitions of ethnicity and nationalism have blossomed accordingly, reflecting the elusive nature of these identities and the difficulty, or even impossibility, of providing an adequate generic theoretical explanation for their appearance. The broad debate between instrumentalists and primordialists has now broken down into a kaleidoscope of differing interpretations, each seemingly selecting facets of these broader explanations in order to construct a more flexible conceptual framework of both contemporary and historical ethnic and national identities. However, it is only comparatively recently that academics have begun to examine the connections between ethnicity and nationalism.[2]

Comparing and contrasting ethnic and national identities in the South African context is particularly useful in that it illustrates the similarities and differences between the two, demonstrates the connections between them, and provides a useful analytical process whereby peoples' changing social, cultural and political consciousnesses can be explored. Twentieth century South Africa provides a veritable laboratory of differing consciousnesses in this respect, due largely to the longevity of the migrant labour process in the country. This allowed identities, often rural in nature, the crucial space needed in which to reformulate themselves in the wake of colonial capitalism, a space which may not have existed in a situation of more rapid proletarianisation. The existence of these identities, and the attempt by nationalist culture brokers to capture them for their own political projects at specific historical junctures, provides a rich field for exploring the changing consciousnesses and identities of Africans and Afrikaners. The comparison of the two distinct forms of nationalism existing in South Africa allows a further analysis of how differing nationalist ideologues attempted to harness more parochial identities in order to further their own agenda, whilst being re-shaped by the latter in the process. This chapter thus sets out to explore the relationship between ethnic and national identities in South Africa throughout the course of the twentieth century. It concentrates on changing forms of consciousness and identities and what these actually meant to both ethnic and nationalist entrepreneurs and the majority of the people in this time of rapid socio-economic change, and by doing so attempts to tentatively provide more generalised insights, applicable elsewhere, into how differing paths to modernity are forged by

---

[1] For a useful summary of recent works covering ethnicity and nationalism see J. Hutchinson and A. Smith (eds), *Nationalism* Oxford 1994, J. Hutchinson and A. Smith (eds), *Ethnicity*, Oxford, 1996 and T. H. Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, London, 1993.

[2] See A. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, 1986, for a theoretical approach which at times verges on the primordialist. For Africa in general see B. Davidson, *Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State*, London, 1992. For South Africa in particular see G. Mare, *Ethnicity and Politics in South Africa*, London, 1993, and S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London, 1987.

the interaction between ideological culture brokers and the majority of the people with whom they promote their agendas. Anthropological works, biography and autobiography are drawn upon as they provide the raw data for an examination of changing forms of consciousness and identity.[3]

9.1 Strangers in the Land: A Brief Overview of Pre-Colonial Southern African Societies, Identity Formation and Treatment of 'Strangers'.

It seems very difficult to ascertain whether ethnic identities existed to any large extent prior to the full impact of colonial capitalism. Certainly, identities were generally far more fluid and permeable than those which arose in the wake of nineteenth century imperialism and the discovery of diamonds and gold in the late 1800s.[4] Afrikaner identity was no exception. Indeed it is questionable whether some Afrikaner peoples living on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century 'frontier' in the Eastern Cape adhered to an Afrikaner identity at all. The encroachment of modernity and the extension of imperial law and order, whether from the Dutch East India Company or the British who arrived later in the early nineteenth century, threatened their entire way of life. Afrikaners sometimes allied with African chiefs in opposition to British expansion. These alliances could break down identities into fluid, permeable forms.[5]

This merging and blurring of identity boundaries also has a long history among African peoples. The arrival of Bantu-speaking peoples in what became South Africa in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. precipitated a gradual merging between them and the indigenous Khoisan peoples in terms of culture, language and political organisation. This is not to suggest that there were no conflicts between the two, but absorption and inter-marriage were common. The Xhosa chief, Sandile, was the son of a San woman and descendants of his lineage amputated the top joint of the little finger on the right hand in accordance with San custom as a sign of their royal descent.[6] Analysing the treatment of 'strangers' from outside the moral

---

[3] This is not meant to imply that these sources represent a kind of 'true' representation of the identities of the people with which they are concerned. The autobiographies of various early nationalists had their own political agendas, and anthropologists are now accepting that it is impossible to access an unmediated account of peoples' culture, social life and history. As Coplan argues, when people cannot speak for themselves, the very relationship between anthropologist and 'subject' distorts and changes the information elicited (see D. Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals*, London, 1994. P.260. Interestingly, this contrasts with the work of such anthropologists as the Mayers, who centred their work entirely around the concept of allowing people 'to speak for themselves'). Nevertheless, the combination of both, integrated in an historically contingent manner, can, I believe, still go a long way in providing a useful explanatory paradigm concerning the relationship between ethnicity and nationalism in South Africa.

[4] Most revisionist schools of historiography stress the fundamental effect of industrialisation after the gold and diamond discoveries, the activities of missionaries in forging new identities through codifying vernacular written languages, and the deliberate manipulations of African identity by colonial administrators in crystallising ethnic identification in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries - see chapter five.

[5] See for example M. Legassick, 'The Frontier Tradition in South African Historiography', in S. Marks and A. Atmore, *Economy and Society in Precolonial South Africa*, London, 1980. Also N. Mostert's analysis of the life of Coenraad de Buys in his book *Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People*, London, 1993. This is not to underestimate the racialised divisions that existed at this time.

[6] J.D. Omer-Cooper, *History of Southern Africa*, London, 1994. P.16.

economy of the 'tribe' at this historical juncture provides useful insights into the roots of twentieth century ethnic and nationalist identities. Writing in 1974 Hammond-Tooke provides the following analysis:

> *Strangers, being defenceless, are particularly under the protection of the chief or headman and are accorded special privileges. Bantu maintain that today moral behaviour, such as hospitality, respect and truthfulness, is expected among all Bantu, of whatever tribe. It is only the white man who is outside the moral community.*[7]

He further argues that the virtues of a 'good' member of a 'tribe' are 'respect for seniors, loyalty to kinsmen, assistance to neighbours, freedom from the suspicion of witchcraft, generosity, meticulous observance of custom, loyalty to chief and political officers, kindness and forbearance'.[8]

Anthropologists pursuing field research not so far removed from the time of pre-colonial South African societies promote similar perceptions of southern African societies. Writing in 1908, Kidd argues the following:

> *It is the Kafir's primary obligation to sacrifice, if needs be, everything for the good of the clan, and his individual rights are wholly subservient, contingent, and secondary to the performance of his obligations. This sound basis of the social state is undoubtedly one of the main causes of the stability of Kafir society.*[9]

Thus 'individual self-consciousness is not fully developed, though the clan consciousness is amazingly strong'.[10]

Although these are perceptions from anthropologists who did not take into account historical contingency (Hammond-Tooke and Kidd), or who conflated the diversity of experience contained in African societies (Kidd)[11] several themes become apparent here which perhaps feed into the development of later ethnic and nationalist identities. For example, there is the emphasis on the submergence of individualism within the context of the clan or 'tribe'.

---

[7] W.D. Hammond-Tooke, 'World-View 2: A System of Action', in W.D. Hammond-Tooke (ed), *The Bantu-Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa*, London, 1974. P.363.
[8] Ibid. P.362.
[9] D. Kidd, *Kafir Socialism*, New York, 1969 (originally published 1908). P.11.
[10] Ibid. P.17.
[11] Kidd's work was particularly influenced by the perceived threat of socialism taking hold in rural African communities.

Although this was portrayed by Kidd at the time in a teleological, racist sense, with Africans portrayed as somewhere lower down the supposed 'evolutionary' ladder than Europeans, and with the growth of individualism through contact with Europeans entailing an erosion of this communal moral world view, there is a marked similarity between the loyalties portrayed by pre-colonial Africans to their 'tribe', chief and clan and that portrayed by members of ethnicised nationalist groups in the twentieth century. For in all these cases, there is a submergence of the individual in order to accommodate the interests of the wider group. Furthermore, members of more contemporary ethnic and nationalist groups receive many of the same benefits previously accruing to members of these pre-colonial communities, in terms of mutual assistance, sharing of scarce resources, and a common identity. The difference is in the scale and size of the groups concerned. It is interesting to note that, at the time of Hammond-Tooke's writing, treating of strangers was set very much in an anti-colonial tone. Kidd, however, found that this treatment of strangers was set in a much smaller clan, or 'tribal', context. Identities only become available if there are the resources to 'imagine' them, and the incursions of colonialism had much to do with this widening of consciousness.[12] However, there were strands within these pre-colonial societies which may also have been drawn upon by African nationalist culture brokers of a more inclusive bent.

Drawing on the work of Fritz Kramer, Marks has recently attempted an analysis of pre-colonial African perceptions of strangers in the South African context, which focuses on both the potentially exclusive and inclusive elements contained therein.[13] This expands the points made by both Kidd and Hammond-Tooke. Marks cautiously takes up the argument put forward by Kramer that there were basically two ways that Africans perceived strangers. Firstly, through the contrasting of the 'culturally identical stranger' with the 'apparently uncultured barbarian' (the former allowed residence, land and sometimes civil rights, the latter denied basic human rights and possibly enslaved or forcibly incorporated through adoption), or alternatively through the rules of exogamy: 'here a foreigner is anyone whose sisters and daughters one may marry. Whereas the one scheme of excluding the other from the politico-jural system justifies adoption and enslavement, here it legitimates marriage'.[14] The former produces heterogenous and stratified societies; the latter far more homogenous societies. Marks then tests this theory against Southern African pre-colonial societies, arguing that Tswana communities - endogamous and with membership of political units defined by allegiance to a chief and not by birth - differed from Xhosa communities in the Eastern Cape. Tswana chiefdoms therefore allowed individuals who had broken away from their parent 'tribe' to be absorbed within the chiefdom's structure, these individuals frequently being allowed to

---

[12] I am using the term 'imagination' here in the same conceptual vein as that first advocated by B. Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities*, London, 1991(2nd ed).

[13] S. Marks. 'The Tradition of Non-Racism in South Africa', p.p.14-17.

[14] Ibid. P.14.

retain their own customs and differences of dialect. They generally received land and full civic rights, but without the same political influence as the original members of the chiefdom. However, peoples of wholly different origins, such as the Kgalagadi, formed an impoverished underclass of hereditary servants. Xhosa-speaking peoples were exogamous. Therefore although, like the Tswana, 'people who lived outside of the range of Xhosa social relations were regarded as outside of the moral community...this social distance could be reduced by marriage, or through the incorporation of aliens into the Xhosa nation'.[15] The difference between Tswana and Xhosa communities has perhaps been over-emphasised, for Xhosa communities were also political. However the differentiation is suggestive, and points towards elements of inclusion and exclusion which could later be incorporated by both inclusive nationalists and exclusivist ethnic entrepreneurs in order to promote their political agendas.

As has already been mentioned, this had happened between 'Bantu'-speaking peoples and Khoisan for over a thousand years, and it perhaps also explains the assimilation of what became known as Mfengu peoples into Xhosa communities from the early nineteenth century onwards.[16] Marks utilises this concept of relating to strangers in order to demonstrate the fluidity of identity boundaries at this time, and the possibility of erasing them, thus arguing that this represented one of several 'threads' of non-racism which have existed at various times throughout South African history, both in black and white communities.[17] However, it can also be applied to the various forms of nationalist and ethnic identities which began to emerge more rapidly in the South African state from the 1910 Act of Union onwards, and which also demonstrate alternating fluid and rigidified identity boundaries. In order to illustrate this linkage, which also relates to how nationalist and explicitly politicised forms of ethnic identity appealed to the mass of ordinary people, it is first necessary to define the two major strands of nationalism which seem to to have existed - and still exist - within both South Africa and in many other parts of the world.

Broadly speaking, there seem to be two forms of nationalist ideology which have dominated throughout the twentieth century; civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism.[18] These have been defined as follows:

---

[15] Ibid. P.P.15-16.

[16] However, see chapter five for the recent academic controversy concerning Mfengu origins. For contemporary comments referring to inter-marriage between Mfengu and Xhosa peoples see 'Report of the Select Committee 2nd July 1863', in *Cape Parliamentary Papers* chapter four, 1863, and chapter 3.

[17] S. Marks. 'The Tradition of Non-Racism in South Africa', P.17.

[18] See especially A. Smith, *National Identity*, London, 1991, and M. Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging*, London, 1993. For a recent application of these themes to the South African context, see H. Adam, 'The Politics of Ethnic Identity: Comparing South Africa', in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol 18, No 3, 1995. There is also a third form of nationalism which celebrates multi-culturalism, as can be found in the United states and Australia. These differing forms also demonstrate the differing routes to modernity taken up by varous nation-states in their formation, illustrating the importance of making any analysis of identity construction historically contingent.

The ideology of 'non-racism' rejects an ethnic nation in favour of a civic nation, based on equal individual rights, regardless of origin, and equal recognition of all cultural traditions in the public sphere. The civic nation is based on consent rather than descent. Citizenship in ethnic nationalism on the other hand is based on blood and ancestry. Laws of return, as in Israel or Germany, guarantee instant citizenship to members of an imagined ethnic family, even though the returnees are 'de facto' cultural strangers.[19]

The inclusive, universalist, liberal values inherent in civic nationalism very much represent the nationalism espoused by the ANC - although this was internally contested at specific historical junctures. Ethnic nationalism, on the other hand, represented the culturally -brokered form of Afrikaner identity, before and during the apartheid era, although this again was historically internally contested. It can also be applied to the politically ethnicised construction of Zulu identity as promoted by Mangosuthu Buthelezi.[20] Both civic and ethic nationalism set boundaries. Ethnic nationalism sets boundaries through notions of birth, blood and descent, whereas civic nationalism is an abstract liberal ideal which automatically sets boundaries if ethnic groups do not wish to merge within this universalised form of identity construction.[21] Additionally the latter sets boundaries of state citizenship, not everyone having equal access to state resources.

It is very difficult to merge different identity groups - historically sharply differentiated in socio-economic terms, as well as culturally - within a universalist ideal. For civic nationalism in its pure sense is an abstract ideal, and not a human passion (although perhaps it can be developed as such-certainly the 1960s civil rights movement in the United States, and movements for democracy in South Africa contained considerable passion). Emotional, affective and cognitive elements need to be taken into consideration when forging a nationalist identity, or indeed any identity, and this certainly seemed to be the case in pre-colonial African societies, which based their identities around 'imagined' communities in many ways representing enlarged metaphorical families. Furthermore, the treatment of 'strangers' by these two forms of nationalism ('strangers' in this sense represented by identity groups existing outside the boundaries drawn by the two sets of nationalist culture brokers) suggests interesting continuities with the treatment of 'strangers' in pre-colonial African societies. For both in pre-colonial polities and the polities emerging from the impact of colonial capitalism, real tensions existed between egalitarianism and inequality, tensions which seem similar in

---

[19] H. Adam. 'The Politics of Ethnic Identity', P.459.

[20] Politicised Zulu identity demonstrates the difficulty of defining what is nationalism and what is ethnicity, for this culturally brokered form of identity has been conceived of in both terms, as will become apparent.

[21] For a useful discussion of this, and related, issues in a contemporary and more general context see J. Glenn, 'The Interregnum: the South's Insecurity Dilemma', *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol 3 , No 1, 1997.

many respects, despite the vast differences existing in socio-economic and political terms. Furthermore, there were often more connections between twentieth century nationalist culture brokers and older forms of identity than is often made apparent in many historical works. Continuity is as important as change in the formation of twentieth century South African identities.

9.2 Nationalism and Ethnicity in Pre-1948 South Africa

The discovery of gold and diamonds in late nineteenth century South Africa, the 1899-1902 South African war, and the 1910 Act of Union were all significant landmarks in terms of the formation of nationalist, and more explicit ethnic, forms of identity in South Africa. These events initiated the formation of both the ANC and the National party who, in a sense, represented the same political phenomenon. The members of both originated from the black and white professional intelligentsias of the time, all the leaders were men, and both aimed to mobilise a wider support base in order to overcome their exclusion from power as a result of British hegemony.[22] They were also historically forged at a chronologically similar time, the South African Native National Congress (later renamed the ANC) formed in 1912, and the National party founded under General Hertzog in 1914. There were, however, fundamental differences between the two; the former promoting non-racial, inclusive ideals, while the latter eventually developed an inward-looking, exclusive, racist ideology. Additionally, the early ANC was not strongly anti-imperialist, unlike the Nationalist party. The South African political economy after the 1910 Act of Union was dominated by English-speaking South Africans, who had little interest in forging a nationalist consciousness. The dominance of English-speaking people in this sphere contributed to Afrikaner ethnic nationalism due to the prior grievances held regarding British imperialism by many Afrikaners. The former therefore represented civic, as compared to the other's ethnic, nationalism. In order to understand the relative appeal of these ideologies, it is necessary both to examine how they resonated with earlier forms of identity and consciousness, and how these earlier identities actually contributed to the formation of the former. For, as has been stressed throughout this thesis, nationalist and ethnic identities are not just forged through the ideological manipulations of ethnic and nationalist culture-brokers. They are shaped from 'below' as much as from 'above'.[23] It is also

---

[22] This chapter is primarily concerned with theorising the connections between mass and elite forms of consciousness in the formation of ethnic and nationalist identities in a social, rather than a politcal, historical context. Therefore there is not a detailed historical treatment of the political developments which contributed to their formation. See chapter five for a more in-depth analysis of the origins of Afrikaner twentieth century nationalism. For recent works which analyse the origins and development of both forms of nationalism in a comparative format see the following: S. Marks, 'Black and White Nationalisms in South Africa: A Comparative Perspective', in P. Kaarsholm and J. Hultin, *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism. Occasional Paper No 11*, Roskilde, Denmark, 1994, and S. Marks and S. Trapido, 'The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism', in S. Marks and S. Trapido, *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London, 1987.

[23] In chapter 3, stress was placed on the ambiguous nature of moral ethnicity, and how it represented an arena of constant debate with regard to what best represented the identity of a people in the context of rapid, but incomplete, socio-economic change. It thus represented the search for the 'ideal type', without ever realising this ultimate goal. Political tribalism, the

important to examine how nationalist culture-brokers were themselves partially forged through, and influenced by, these more popular diffuse forms of identity. For it is through this interaction that nationalist and politicised ethnic identities were, and are, forged.

African Nationalism had particular problems in relating to more rurally based, localised identities in this period. Rural people often consolidated their identity around their chief, partially because they could often provide the focus for resistance to land expropriation by the British and by Afrikaners.[24] This did not easily resonate with African Nationalists' concerns regarding political equality, and a broadly inclusive form of national identity. In fact, especially during the 1920s, other organisations, such as the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (henceforth, the ICU), were far more successful in terms of popular mobilisation due to their greater readiness in incorporating these more localised grievances within a broader political objective.[25] The very process of forging a populist form of nationalist consciousness was itself fraught with difficulties and tensions, as - just as in pre-colonial societies - it ran a thin line between egalitarianism and inequality. Nevertheless, there were individuals who sought to bridge this gap, and an analysis of how they endeavoured to achieve this demonstrates the difficulty of projecting an abstract concept of either class or civic nationalism onto the popular consciousness of rural people. The most successful of these individuals were also not so far removed from the more populist forms of rural identity which they sought to overlay with a civic nationalist or class consciousness. This demonstrates the often ambiguous, multi-faceted and debated natures of identity formation in twentieth century South Africa.

Migrant labour was a central factor in the formation of ethnicised identities in this period, and also influenced the development of the two nationalist movements mentioned above. In the 1970s, structural Marxist interpretations of the migrant labour process focussed primarily on the advantages accruing to mine owners through promoting and perpetuating this form of work pattern.[26] This somewhat functionalist view was revised in the 1980s by social historians who attempted to go beyond the concept that migrant labour was solely the product of the needs of capitalism.[27] This revisionist school sought to demonstrate that rural Africans were not passive victims of the machinations of capitalism, but initially endeavoured to manipulate the migrant

---

manipulation of ethnic identities by the state, hi-jacked this ambiguous search through the crystallisation of identities in a rigidified format, allowing no debate. This appealed to people who were looking for certainties in the midst of a rapidly changing society. This argument can also be applied to the form of ethnic nationalism promoted by the Nationalist party. For it too sought to construct a monolithic form of Afrikaner identity. To this extent, Afrikaner nationalism was very much a form of ethnic identity aiming at capturing control of the state.

[24] See chapter 3.

[25] See for example H. Bradford, 'Lynch Laws and Labourers: The ICU in Umvoti, 1927-1928', in W. Beinart, P. Delius and S. Trapido (eds), *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South Africa, 1850-1930*, Johannesburg, 1986.

[26] Perhaps the most well-known example of this approach is H. Wolpe, 'Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid', *Economy and Society*, Vol 1, London, 1972. However, it is important to recognise that Wolpe only examined the process of migrant labour when it was well established.

[27] See for example, W. Beinart, 'Chieftaincy and the Concept of Articulation: South Africa Circa 1900-1950', *Canadian Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol 19, 1985.

labour system in order to upkeep pre-capitalist forms of social and political communities. As African initiative was central to this approach, changing African consciousness became a central theme to be explored. However it seems that it is precisely within this realm of changing consciousness that both moral ethnicity and political tribalism were produced, and, in the first half of the twentieth century in particular, it was with this changing consciousness that nationalist culture brokers had to work. Afrikaner ethnic nationalism developed somewhat differently, due to the more rapid proletarianisation of rural Afrikaners.[28] However, changing forms of Afrikaner consciousness also provided the cultural building blocks with which Afrikaner culture brokers had to work in order to forge a wider, more exclusive, Afrikaner identity. Therefore there are also many similarities between the historical formation of both forms of nationalism.

In addition to migrant labour, two factors seem to have been of central importance to changing forms of African consciousness in this period - the changing institution of chieftaincy and the codification of vernacular languages. The interaction between these three criteria began to forge a wider African consciousness, which in turn led to increasing debate within African societies with regard to what best represented African ethnicised identities - moral ethnicity. This also entailed a proliferation of differing paths towards modernity, something which modernisation theorists of the 1960s failed to recognise when they argued that ethnic identities were an archaic hangover from the pre-colonial African past, soon to disappear in the supposed inevitable tide of 'progress'.[29] African culture brokers of this period, nationalist or otherwise, grew up and were socialised within this rapidly changing socio-economic climate, and an examination of their beliefs, identity formation and consciousness shed theoretical light on both the forging of nationalist and ethnic identities.

The importance of language in the forging of nationalist consciousness is evident in the lives of many early nationalist culture brokers. Solomon Plaatje, who became the first secretary of the South African Native National Congress in 1912, was fluent in eight different languages, both African and European, and wrote regularly in half of these.[30] D.D.T. Jabavu, son of the founder of the Eastern Cape African newspaper *Imvo Zabantsundu* John Tengo Jabavu and one of the coordinators with the ANC in order to form the All Africa Convention in 1935, was fluent in seven vernacular languages, Afrikaans and English.[31] Stimela Jason Jingoes, a resident of Lesotho and an ardent advocate of the institute of Sotho chieftaincy (which does

---

[28] See B. Bozzoli, 'Marxism, Feminism and Southern African Studies', *JSAS*, Vol 9, No 2, 1983.

[29] See chapter two for a more comprehensive analysis of the modernisation approach which dominated the 1960s in one guise or another. It is important to mention here that I am not completely dismissing all the findings of this approach. There do seem to be distinct historical paths towards modernity in South African societies, which directly impinged on identity making processes. However, the diverse paths towards modernity, and the forging of both moral ethnic and political tribalist versions of ethnicity, are not taken fully into account. Nor is the fact that modernity does not necessarily equate with 'progress'.

[30] B. Willan. *Solomon Plaatje: South African Nationalist, 1876-1932*, London, 1984. P.vii, preface.

[31] N. Jabavu. *The Ochre People: Scenes From a South African Life*, London, 1963. P. 253.

not mean that he was not critical of it), although not at the forefront of ANC activities in South Africa, can also be perceived as an early nationalist culture broker in a sense, and was fluent in several of the Sotho and Nguni language groupings as well as English and Afrikaans.[32] Usually products of mission education, early African nationalists often synthesised African and European world views, which to them was not a contradiction in terms. An overview of the lives of these three personalities, as well as others, demonstrates the importance of language in bridging the gap between smaller scale rural African communal consciousnesses, and that of a wider nationalist bent. It also demonstrates that African nationalist culture brokers were just as much a product of the rural African societies from which they originated, as that of European education and a growing capitalist economy. Nationalist culture brokers were just as much shaped by their own points of origin, as shapers of a wider, nationalist identity which they intended to impose from above onto the mass of rural African communities. This reflects the argument of revisionist social historians in the 1980s that African rural communities were very involved in the reformulation of ethnic and national identities in the wake of colonialism and capitalism, and were not just passive recipients.

Jabavu, Jingoes and Plaatje all worked hard to preserve the customs of the peoples from whom they originated. In later life Plaatje was very much involved in attempts to preserve Tswana language, custom and folk-lore through the medium of the written word.[33] Jingoes consistently argued for the preservation of the Sotho chieftaincy, despite the seeming paradox of being at one time a committed, leading ICU member.[34] D.T.T. Jabavu spent much time in attempting to preserve Xhosa tradition.[35] It is perhaps this eclectic approach that differentiates earlier advocates of African nationalism from the more radical versions which arose in the wake of apartheid,[36] although even in that era a certain eclecticism existed. Male initiation into manhood, *hlonipha* customs, patriarchal constructions of family life, the significance of the ancestors, the importance of chieftaincy, and moral values such as reciprocity, the submergence of individualism among the community, treatment of 'strangers' and the importance of upkeeping 'tribal' tradition all figured variously but prominently in the lives and

---

[32] S.J. Jingoes. *A Chief is a Chief by the People*, London, 1975. P.p. xii-xiii, preface.

[33] B. Willan. *Solomon Plaatje*. Chp 14.

[34] S.J. Jingoes. *A Chief is a Chief by the People*. Chps 5 and 7.

[35] N. Jabavu. *The Ochre People*. Esp. p.p. 114-119, and p.p.253-256.

[36] Willan makes the following point with respect to Plaatje's finally largely unsuccessful attempts to gain recognition for his version of written Tswana language: 'The tragedy is not simply that so much of what he wrote was lost, but that the effect of subsequent political developments in South Africa was to turn his natural successors away from anything which appeared to give sustenance to ethnic nationalism. In Plaatje's mind there was no conflict between his devotion to the Tswana language and the furtherance of its literature, and the wider political ideals for which he strove. But for those who came after him, who lived under a government intent on dividing the African people along ethnic lines, the contradiction became too great: untold damage was done not only to setswana but to the literary development of all the other African languages of South Africa'. See *Solomon Plaatje*, p.p.390-1.

works of Jabavu, Plaatje and Jingoes, as with other prominent early members of the nascent African nationalist movement.[37]

Although set in the era of early apartheid, Noni Jabavu records a poignant observation made by one of her aunts at a social gathering which lucidly portrays the eclectic approach of these early nationalists:

> *'We are conservatives, we; and cling to custom; but at the same time learn and adapt. No longer do we cling like a grasshopper to the barbed wire fence on which it is impaled in flight, and remaining static only because dead!' She looked around for the ironic applause that would greet this, and it came, for she had trotted out the well-known figurative chestnut that illustrates the difference between constructive tenacity on the one hand and sterile ossification on the other.*[38]

Here, Jabavu's aunt seems to be touching on the ability of Africans to utilise custom in a reformulated sense in order to forge an identity situated in a rapidly changing social, political and economic climate. This was similarly achieved by many rural societies in an ethnicised sense during the 1920s, when people often mobilised around their chiefs in order to oppose colonial land expropriation. Histories of resistance to colonial rule were important to many early nationalist culture brokers,[39] and this perhaps heightened their sense of the need to preserve pre-colonial customs - or at least those which did not too overtly contradict their mission school upbringing and christian religious affiliation.

Most historians have seen the 'modernist' civic element in early African nationalism as dominant. But recently, some historians have argued that this somewhat Janus-like aspect of early nationalists promoted hardened, politically tribalist, versions of ethnic identities. The Mfengu/Xhosa divide which became apparent in the first half of the twentieth century provides a useful example with which to illustrate this point. Stapleton has argued that D.D.T. Jabavu implicitly promoted Mfengu ethnic identity above that of Xhosa, through his support of a centenary celebration of 'Fingo emancipation Day' in a mission-controlled newspaper.[40] However, it seems that Stapleton has misunderstood the content of the article, confusing

---

[37] See *A Chief is a Chief by the People*, esp chps 1, 6, 7, 8; *The Ochre People*, esp p.p.61-70, 85, 87, 104, 109, p.p.114-119, p.p.127-139, 177-8, 220-21, p.p.249-261; *Solomon Plaatje*, esp chp 14. For other examples see S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth Century Natal*, London, 1986, and 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness', in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, 1989.

[38] *The Ochre People*, p. 236.

[39] See footnote 37 above.

[40] T. Stapleton, 'Gathering Under the Milkwood Tree: The Development of Mfengu Tribalism in the Eastern Cape (1878-1978), unpublished paper, 1995 . P.15.

Mfengu/Xhosa divisions with - the admittedly similar but not same - 'Red'/'School' divide which emerged in the Eastern Cape in the aftermath of the colonial wars waged against the Xhosa.[41] Stapleton concentrates on the following extracts from the article in promoting his argument:

> *If there be any rivalry, let us impart to it a new orientation to produce the maximum in furthering the cause of christianity, education and the social betterment of our backward brothers ...we can join with the Fingoes annually on the 14th May in recalling the triple vow of loyalty to our government, to our religion and to the cause of education.*[42]

Stapleton understands 'backward brothers' to refer exclusively to Xhosa peoples as against Mfengu. However, I believe that the term refers to a different, if sometimes related, set of identities. Jabavu is specifically advocating the 'cause' of 'christianity, education and social betterment', something which stems from his own mission school education. He is therefore not referring to rigid definitions of Mfengu and Xhosa, as Stapleton seems to imply, but rather to the 'Red'/'School' cleavage. There were also 'Red' Mfengu communities which existed well into the twentieth century, for example in Peddie district.[43] What Jabavu seemed to be attempting was to forge a wider consciousness amongst African peoples in the Eastern Cape, set in the context of the area's past history and through the idiom of European education and religion. He was primarily promoting these issues, and not that of some perceived Mfengu superiority. In the article itself, Jabavu stresses the need, not only to celebrate the 'Fingo Centenary', but also 'Ntsikana Day' which celebrates the conversion of the first Xhosa christian convert. Furthermore, much of Jabavu's article is concerned with dismissing the then popular argument among many colonial historians that the colonialist government liberated the Mfengu peoples in 1835 from slavery under the Xhosa chief Hintsa. This is not to deny that celebration of this centenary could promote ethnicised divisions, especially as many Mfengu predominated in professional posts within the colonial hierarchy, originating from their assistance to British colonial forces in suppressing Xhosa resistance in the nineteenth century and the subsequent opportunities made available to them through education. However, it seems that Jabavu was attempting to weld together these divisions under the banner of education, religion and a nascent nationalism - rather than imply a Mfengu

---

41 For an analysis of the 'Red'/'School' divide which takes into account the historical context see P. Mayer, 'The Origin and Decline of Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', in P. Mayer (ed), *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society*, Oxford, 1980. Also see L. Switzer, *Power and Resistance in an African Society: The Ciskei Xhosa and the Making of South Africa*, London, 1993, and J. Peires, 'Ethnicity and Pseudo-Ethnicity in the Ciskei', in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*.

42 D.D.T. Jabavu, 'The 'Fingo Slavery' Myth', in *South African Outlook*, June 1st, 1935.

43 See P. Mayer, 'The Origin and Decline of Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', in P. Mayer (ed), *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society*, Cape Town, 1980.

'superiority' - in advocating a celebration of this event, however mistaken this may have been in hindsight.

Nevertheless, there were instances where Jabavu did display a somewhat 'essentialist' view of 'tribal' identities. For example, his daughter Noni records a conversation with a relative who recites a letter from Jabavu in his youth, itself referring to a conversation between him and his friends with regard to the supposed characteristics of different 'tribes':

> *Zulus are good at war, experts at medical herbs, but not dependable at all...too swift-tempered and reckless. Xhosa...are far too fond of this stick-fighting; too haughty and defiant of authority...Then we discussed the Basutho. More than any race in the world, they love arguing, arguing: never stop. But we agreed they are buoyant, humorous; and for that we liked them. On the other hand they are hard-hearted, steely-eyed, calculating even while smiling...And as for that cousin-marriage system of theirs - brothers and sisters being married, oh, it made our flesh creep to think of living like that.*[44]

Of course, Jabavu may have altered his opinion regarding these stereotypes as he grew older and became more involved in politics. However, it does serve to illustrate the assumptions with which he grew up, and implicitly the difficulties of overlaying a democratic nationalist consciousness upon African peoples at the time. For there were divisions and stereotypes among African peoples which cannot solely be put down to colonial manipulation, 'retribalisation', and 'divide and rule' policies. Nevertheless, in the final analysis nationalists such as Jabavu vigorously sought to diminish divisions amongst Africans, and to promote an African Nationalism which they perceived as all-embracing.[45]

Both Afrikaner and African nationalism in South Africa were shaped 'by the uneven development of its political economy and the disintegrating effects of industrialisation, urbanisation and modernity on older values and moralities'.[46] The South African political economy after the 1910 Act of Union was dominated by English-speaking South Africans who had little interest in the promotion of Afrikaner identity. Many sought rather to construct a broad, white South African identity, including Afrikaners, but maintaining close links with the British Empire.[47] However, this English-speaking hegemony provoked an ethnicised

---

[44] *The Ochre People*, P.251.

[45] See for example L. Switzer, *Power and Resistance in an African Society*, London, 1993, Chapter 6.

[46] S. Marks, 'Black and White Nationalisms in South Africa: A Comparative Perspective', P.117.

[47] See for example the following: P. Merrington, 'Pageantry and Primitivism: Dorothea Fairbridge and the "Aesthetics of Union" ', *JSAS*, Vol 21, No 4, 1995; J. Carruthers, 'Creating a National Park, 1910 to 1926', *JSAS*, Vol 15, No 2, 1989.

mobilisation among the Afrikaner intelligentsia, who already had grievances about colonial domination as a result of the 1899-1902 South African war and earlier British colonial reforms, such as the ending of slavery in the 1830s which partly contributed to the so-called 'Great Trek'. Similarly, there was no place for the mission-educated African intelligentsia in the new system of political power. This group, denied a political presence in the newly forged union, attempted to promote a universalistic, democratic form of nationalism - an approach which resonated with the assimilationist ideals of the British colonial power before the advent of social Darwinism and a more systematic racism in the late nineteenth century.[48]

Language, custom and the institution of chieftaincy became central pivots around which people sought to re-define and mobilise themselves in response to this newly evolved colonial hegemony. Language preservation became a central concern among ethnic and nationalist culture brokers, and led to the formation of politically tribalist versions of ethnic identity.[49] Indeed, the codification of language was a highly ambiguous exercise. It could be utilised in order to promote civic nationalism and a wider, more inclusive, nationalist identity, although this was very difficult in the case of most rural African people at the time, who were largely illiterate and therefore adhered to more readily available parochial identities reinforced by the particular spoken language in which they had been socialised.[50] However, it could also harden identities into a more exclusivist form. Religion could play a major part in defining ethnic identities in this period, and the codification of languages facilitated this role. There are also interesting comparisons to be made in this respect with regard to the formation of various African ethnic identities, and Afrikaner ethnicity.

Mission education meant that the small African nationalist intelligentsia used English as the medium through which a pan-African identity could be forged. However, as mentioned, this was not available to the majority of the African population and contributed to the difficulties of early African nationalists in forging a nationalist identity, especially as they concentrated on abstract principles such as the right to vote and equality before the law, whereas the bulk of

---

[48] For an in-depth analysis of how Social Darwinist theories were developed by segregationist ideologists in the early twentieth century, thus further limiting any possibility of African political participation at state level, see S. Dubow, *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa, c. 1919-1936*, London, 1989, Chapter 1. Also S. Dubow, *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*, Cambridge, 1995.

[49] Benedict Anderson's concepts of 'print capitalism' and 'imagined communities' have been important influences upon the work of historians concerned with Southern Africa (B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections On the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, 183, 1991). See for example T. Ranger, 'Missionaries, Migrants and the Manyika: The Invention of Ethnicity in Zimbabwe', in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, and I. Hofmeyer, 'Building a Nation from Words: Afrikaans Language, Literature and 'Ethnic' Identity, 1902-1924', in S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds), *The Politics of Race, Class and nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London, 1987. Hofmeyer's work illustrates how the codification and promotion of Afrikaans language as central to Afrikaner identity enabled the displaced Afrikaner intelligentsia of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to forge a hardened Afrikaner ethnicity. Ranger's work, as mentioned in chapter four, turns Anderson's concept 'on its head', in that it demonstrates how the codification of vernacular languages by missionaries in this period could facilitate the production of a plethora of ethnicised identities, rather forging a single nationalist one.

[50] However identities could form within language groups. For example, the Mpondo and Mpondomise of the 'Nguni' language group (see the introduction by M. Wilson in A.M. Duggan-Cronin, *The Bantu Tribes of South Africa*, Vol 3, Section 2, The Mpondo and Mpondomise, Cambridge, 1949).

the African peoples were concerned primarily with colonial land expropriation and being able to survive. Codification of languages also led to culturally-brokered constructions of history which served to harden ethnic identifications. Concepts of 'special destiny', 'sacred vows' and 'chosen people' evolved through these re-interpretations of historical events.

To utilise just one example, there were some intriguing similarities between culturally brokered concepts of Mfengu identity and that of Afrikaners in this period. The Afrikaner language, although mainly based on Dutch, had diverse origins including Malay, Portuguese, Khoisan, and elements of German, French, English and Southern Nguni languages.[51] Therefore, there was originally a great diversity of dialects amongst Afrikaner communities in South Africa. This became the focus of widespread political attention in the early twentieth century. Rinderpest, agrarian reform and change, the South African war and the subsequent rapid urbanisation of formerly rural Afrikaners led to a process of assimilation in which poorer Afrikaners merged with other peoples, ethnic boundaries breaking down and becoming more fluid. In addition, the upper strata of Cape Afrikaner society was becoming increasingly anglicised as British rule entrenched itself in the nineteenth century. Many Cape Afrikaners took up the economic opportunities which became available, and in the process came to support the imperialist project.[52] This alarmed the more radical amongst the Afrikaner intelligentsia, who sought to promote a more exclusivist Afrikaner identity in order to protect their own interests, as set against the economic and political hegemony of the English-speaking population. By the second decade of the twentieth century, the Second Language Movement - a body of Afrikaner intellectuals who sought to maintain the Afrikaans language and preserve Afrikaner identity - had codified the Afrikaner language. By the mid-1920s, the bible had been translated into Afrikaans, and it had also become the second official language. The Afrikaner Nationalist Party, which had split away from Smuts' and Botha's more inclusivist notion of South African identity, sought to define Afrikaners as a 'chosen people'. People such as General Hertzog and Dr Malan (a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church who was later to lead the National party to victory in the 1948 election) perceived language as of primary importance in avoiding the submergence of Afrikanerdom within a more inclusivist context.[53] The codification of Afrikaans led to the creation of a sacred history which reinforced this notion of Afrikaners as a people with a sacred destiny. Much of this sacred history centred around a

---

[51] See I. Hofmeyer, 'Building A Nation From Words', P.96.

[52] For an interesting examination of Cape Afrikaner identity at the end of the nineteenth century, and the influence of Cecil Rhodes in its construction, see M. Tamarkin, *Cecil Rhodes and the Cape Afrikaners: The Imperial Colossus and the Colonial Parish Pump*, London, 1996. Also see M. Tamarkin, 'Nationalism or 'Tribalism': The Evolution of Cape Afrikaner Ethnic Consciousness in the Late Nineteenth Century', *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol 1, Part 2, 1995.

[53] See H. Giliomee, 'The Growth of Afrikaner Identity', in H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds), *Ethnic Power Mobilised: Can South Africa Change?* Yale, 1979. In this article, Giliomee quotes Malan, a Dutch Reformed Minister who later led the National party to victory in the 1948 election: 'Raise the Afrikaans language to a written language, let it become the vehicle for our culture, our history, our national ideals, and you will also raise the people who speak it...The Afrikaans Language Movement is nothing less than an awakening of our nation to self-awareness and to the vocation of adopting a more worthy position in world civilisation.'

supposed sacred vow, and it is at this juncture where the similarities between culturally brokered Mfengu identity and culturally brokered Afrikaner identity become apparent.

The centennial celebration of the 1838 'Great Trek' involved a celebration of the 'Day of the Covenant'. This referred to the vow undertaken by Boer 'Trekkers' a few days before the so-called battle of Blood River, when the former gained a crucial victory over the Zulu army. The original vow involved an undertaking that if God gave the 'Trekkers' victory they would ensure that the day would be celebrated as an anniversary ever after, and a church would be built in order to worship him. The reenactment of this vow a century later became a significant factor in crystallising a more exclusivist, politically tribalist version of Afrikaner ethnic identity. The vow, together with the interweaving of particular events in Afrikaner history - such as the 'Battle of Blood River' itself, the 1899-1902 war and the suffering undergone in the concentration camps - into a 'sacred history', led to the culturally brokered version of Afrikaner identity aimed at by the Broederbond and other cultural organisations promoting a reification of an exclusivist Afrikaner identity.[54] It became something of a 'civil religion', with Afrikaner people being projected as a 'chosen people'. Afrikaner identity was portrayed in terms of blood, descent, and 'special calling', an exclusivist form of spiritualised identity very much in the mould of nascent ethnic nationalism.

Conversely, the celebration of the centenary of 'Fingo Emancipation Day', which occured only three years earlier, was couched in different terms. As illustrated above, the central themes promoted in pursuing this celebration were mission education, christianity and a type of Victorian concept of 'evolutionary progress', much in vogue with early African nationalists. Nevertheless, there are striking similarities between the two. Both the culturally brokered Afrikaner identity adhered to by radicalised members of the Afrikaner intelligentsia, and the 'Fingo Emancipation' celebrations implied a form of 'special destiny': the former couched in terms of separation from the perceived destiny of others (especially English speakers, British imperialism being the significant 'other' against which Afrikaner ethnic culture brokers identified themselves), and the latter in terms of 'evolutionary progress' and 'enlightenment'. The contrast between the two demonstrates the difficulty of providing an overlying civic nationalist identity amongst Africans at this historical juncture, and the qualified success of promoting Afrikaner ethnic nationalism. However, in order to illustrate this fully, it is necessary to take into account the consciousness of the bulk of ordinary people, Afrikaner and African, and how they perceived these newly reformulated identities. For the machinations and rhetoric of ethnic and nationalist culture brokers cannot be relied upon to supply the complete complex reality of how ordinary people perceived these identities.

---

[54] See D. Moodie, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom: Power, Apartheid, and the Afrikaner Civil Religion*, chapter 9. also L. Thompson, *The Political Mythology of Apartheid*, London, 1985.

Language was also a limitation in terms of promoting civic nationalism among African peoples. African ethnicised identities certainly seem to have focussed around the various remnant chiefdoms in this period, partly as this was the only available source of identity which could be mobilised in order to resist colonial incursions. Wider identifications were curtailed by such criteria as language barriers. It can be tenuously suggested that there was a link between civic nationalism, class and multilingualism. Of course many ordinary blacks spoke more than one language, but these were utilised in day-to-day interaction, and not codified, standardised and entrenched within the parameters of a political project. The interaction of colonial and indigenous peoples, however, also held the possibility of wider affiliations and identities becoming available.

9.3 The Changing Nature of Ethnicised Identities Prior to 1948: Some Theoretical Reflections

Before examining the development of ethnic and national identities in the second half of the twentieth century, it is worthwhile reflecting upon the connections between pre-colonial forms of consciousness and those which evolved from the late nineteenth century onwards. What is perhaps most apparent is that the ideology of individualism implicitly promoted by early mission schools was not entirely upheld by the early African nationalists who emerged from them. There does seem to have been a need for the submergence of the individual within kinship relationships, and the overlaying of Christian values did not necessarily contradict this. Additionally, migrant labour and policies of segregation seem to have provoked a 'freezing' of African identities in this period, Africans selecting different facets of European modes of living and belief patterns, synthesising them with indigenous African moral world views, and adhering to these syncretic identities years after the European components of these identity constructions had largely disappeared from European societies. The fact that these eclectic identities varied considerably, often reflecting generational, gender, and early class divides, demonstrate the markedly different paths towards modernity which Africans trod in these years. Noni Jabavu poignantly comments on certain aspects of life of some of her Christian, mission educated relatives, noting that they consciously refused to update certain household equipment, preferring to use much older types. She argues that this was because they 'were wedded to the Victorian way of life, the kind of 'Westernization' that seemed to have truly penetrated'.[55] As Jabavu was writing in the era of early apartheid, this demonstrates the way European cultural facets were selected, 'frozen' and re-worked in order to synthesize with reformulated African identity formations, providing an example of 'selective conservatism'.

---

[55] N. Jabavu, *The Ochre People*, P.157. 'School' women also appropriated forms of Victorian dress, and these remained an important form of cultural identity marker into the 1950s. See P. Mayer, 'The Origin and Decline of Two Rural Resistance Ideologies', in P. Mayer (ed), *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society*, p.p.27-28.

Male associations such as *Indlavini* groups[56] also selected facets of European life-styles, such as clothing. 'Oxford bag' style trousers were adopted and adapted by *Indlavini* members in the 1930s as a mark of reformulated identity. A 'European' fashion, 'itself an expression of social freedom in the 1920s, was adopted, adapted and then retained as a relatively fixed style for the next half century'.[57] Furthermore, in both these widely differing examples, previous African customs were reformulated rather than eradicated. The individual was also submerged within the context of the 'group', the former in terms of a religious affiliation translated into a complete life-style, and the latter in terms of a reformulated male association which, influenced by the process of migrant labour, broke away from traditionalist youth organisations whilst retaining a considerable amount of traditionalist custom, including submerging individual interests for the group.[58] Although simplifying a complex situation, it seems reasonable to generalise that it was only with more permanent migration to urban areas in the later inter-war years that this eclectic form of identity formation began to break down.[59] Altruistic tendencies towards the group only then began to erode significantly.

Altruism was a significant factor in pre-capitalist African societies, at least within the 'tribe'. There were also mechanisms for assimilating peoples from outside the 'tribe' or clan, as illustrated above. These altruistic tendencies among small-scale societies have been the focus of many anthropological and social scientific studies in the past, which sought to conceptualise the changes which the impact of colonialism, capitalism and the growth of individualism wrought on these moral universes.[60] The need for mutual cooperation in terms of agriculture, hunting, foraging and defense was high in parts of these societies due to a relatively low level of technology and a relatively simple division of labour. Reciprocity and mutual cooperation seem to have been reinforced through symbolism, ritual and religious beliefs. To take just one example, ancestor worship was extremely important in terms of bonding communities, and directly influenced altruistic motives amongst peoples of the same clan or 'tribe'. Indeed, ancestors were very much part of everyday reality for many Southern African peoples, and they would often be perceived as shaping the day-to-day lives of the people concerned. Kidd's portrayal of African rural societies in the early part of the twentieth

---

[56] See chapter 8 for how *Indlavini* groups represented a possible example of moral ethnicity.

[57] W. Beinart, 'The Origins of the *Indlavini*: Male Associations and Migrant Labour in the Transkei', in A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds), *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, 1991, P.116.

[58] Again, see chapter 8 for a thorough analysis of the development of these male associations, their relationship to ethnic identities, and the effect of migrant labour upon their formation.

[59] See W. Beinart, 'Political and collective Violence in Southern African Historiography', in *JSAS*, Vol 18, No 3, 1992, P.479. Beinart also records a section of Dikobe's novel *The Marabi Dance* (London, 1973), which refers to a member of an urban street gang in the 1930s: 'He could speak neither Sesuthu, which was his father's language, nor Afrikaaans, his mother's language, well. He could not finish a sentence in a single language'. This implicitly demonstrates the importance of vernacular languages in maintaining rural ethnicised identities, for in the urban slum context at least, the breakdown of language barriers resulted in different forms of allegiance.

[60] For just four of many examples over a wide span of time see the following: F. Tonnies, *Community and Society*, Michigan, 1957, G. and M. Wilson, *The Analysis of Social Change Based on Observations in Central Africa*, Cambridge, 1944, M. Wilson, 'Change in Scale', in M. Wilson (ed), *Religion and the Transformation of Society*, Cambridge, 1971, D. Kidd, *Kafir Socialism.*

century reflects this closeness of the ancestors. This is despite his tendency to conflate the lived experiences of different African communities, and his assumption that they were mostly unable to adapt to 'western' life styles:

> *The Kafirs live in a very circumscribed environment, and the memory of an old man's personality would pervade all associations of the kraal in which he lived...the power of association would bring him to their thoughts a thousand times a day, and the spot close to the cattle kraal where they buried him would seem to be the focus of these memories. The natives draw omens from every trifling incident of life, and would connect the memory of the old man with all their fortunes...All their joys, fears, hopes and sorrows would be connected with this dead man's personality.*[61]

Incurring the wrath of the ancestors through, for example, neglecting their worship or pursuing individual interests to the detriment of the wider community, could thus invoke serious consequences.[62]

The effect of Christianity and its attendant individualism did not eradicate this form of community bonding. Jingoes places great stress upon the importance of the ancestors in shaping his life, arguing that there is no contradiction between being a Christian and ancestor worship:

> *When I am in trouble, or when I pray for anything, I pray first to my ancestors, and ask them to take my prayer to the Lord Jesus. Many Basotho say that Roman Catholics are worshipping their ancestors in the saints; why, they ask, should one appeal to ancestors who never knew one, and who are not of one's lineage, when one's own ancestors are there? I have never felt guilty, just because ministers say it is a sin to worship the ancestors.*[63]

---

[61] D. Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, London, 1925 (2nd ed, first published 1904), P.79. Kidd further comments that such issues as good crops or drought were perceived as primarily due to the pleasure or displeasure of the ancestors (ibid).

[62] Ibid, P.p.137-40. For a useful overview of the way ancestors shaped the lives of the many diverse rural African communities of the first half of the twentieth century , synthesising the work of many different anthropologists, see the following: W.D. Hammond-Tooke, 'World-View One: A System of Beliefs', and 'World View Two: A System of Action', in W.D. Hammond-Tooke (ed), *The Bantu Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa*, London, 1974. There is an element of ahistoricity in these works but, when made historically contingent, they offer valuable insights which are generally not forthcoming in historical works which reify materialist analysis to the detriment of everything else (see chapters two and three for a discussion concerning these themes).

[63] S. Jingoes, *A Chief is a Chief by the People.* P.16.

D.D.T. Jabavu similarly upheld many aspects of African custom which aimed at avoiding individualism and promoted reciprocity, as did Solomon Plaatje (see above). The ambiguities which resulted from this eclectism had important repercussions in terms of the development of ethnic identities. This was especially apparent in Natal and Zululand during the 1920s and 1930s.[64]

What seems to have been sown in the first half of the twentieth century were the seeds of civic and ethnic nationalism, as well as moral ethnicity. But it is important not to conceptualise these movements in terms of binary opposites. Civic and ethnic nationalism evolved from the same social and cultural origins. Nationalism has historically always been an ambiguous phenomenon, and in the nineteenth century allied with most nineteenth century ideologies, such as socialism, liberalism and conservatism.[65] In the South African context, it seems to have been synthesised with selected facets of African cultural world views in an ecletic manner by early twentieth century African nationalists. Products of both mission school education, but fully aware and sympathetic towards facets of indigenous African culture, this nascent civic nationalist movement contained the seeds of both an inclusive, fully developed civic nationalist ideology, but could also deteriorate into ethnic nationalism due to the possible reification of older pre-colonial identities into a more ossified, politically tribalist ethnicity, as sometimes happened in the era of apartheid. The arrival of literacy and 'print-capitalism' allowed the growth of 'imagined communities' based on these criteria, as it also allowed culture-brokers to widen the appeal of an ethnicised Afrikaner identity. However, as Afrikaner identity became more explicit, it also became more debated in terms of what actually represented an identity. As Giliomee states, 'sacred histories' might have been important to ethnic culture brokers such as the Broederbond, but it was enough for many ordinary Afrikaners 'to be told that they were a separate people with particular interests that could best be promoted through mobilisation'.[66] It was only after Smuts took South Africa into the Second World War on the side of Britain that the concept of a more inclusive English and Afrikaans speaking identity was shattered as old anti-British and anti-imperialist feelings were re-awoken.[67]

For many Africans, especially those who lived amongst remnant chiefdoms such as the Zulu or Mpondo, kinship identities were still a powerful force, and this sense of a family kinship was widened through mobilising ethnicised identities.[68] Although this was partly ideological, and with the advent of a more widely available print readership could be defined in numerous

---

[64] See chapter 5.
[65] See chapter 3.
[66] H. Giliomee, 'The Growth of Afrikaner Identity', in H. Adam and H. Giliomee, *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* Yale, 1979.
[67] Ibid.
[68] See chapter 3.

different ways, this widening also entailed what previously were implicit, 'passive' identities into explicit, mobilised, political forces. However, once these 'passive' identities became more explicit, as they did both through the dissemination of newspapers and through the contact of different peoples on the mines, they at once formed ethnicised boundaries, as people began to define themselves against others. Cultural differences became politically salient, especially where resources were scarce and a mobilisation of putative characteristics could ensure a greater share of these - something that mine management positively encouraged on the mines in order to avoid the possibility of a more cohesive and united workforce.[69] The incorporation of 'strangers' into smaller pre-colonial chiefdoms was no longer possible, peoples' consciousness having been altered through increasing contact with others, in a rapidly changing, incomplete and unequal socio-economic climate. People were now more conscious of ethnicised identities, and as such, where these identities could matter, as they often did in an era of segregation, boundaries were drawn and the inclusive metaphoric family of pre-colonial clans and 'tribes' became more exclusivist in nature. These identities therefore remained important despite the arrival of ideologies of individualism through mission education and a nascent capitalist economy, or maybe even because of them, as individualism itself allowed a far greater, more explicit debate concerning what exactly represented, for example, Zulu or Mpondo identity. The eclectism of African communities in terms of reformulating ethnic identities by adapting certain aspects of European originating ideologies and life-styles, and then re-investing them with different symbolic - sometimes ethnicised - meanings, is an example of this debate. African nationalist culture brokers had to deal with this proliferation of debated identities in the era of apartheid (and indeed, in the aftermath of its demise), whereas Afrikaner identity, due in no small part to the more rapid proletarianisation of Afrikaners, was less complicated in terms of being manipulated by ethnic nationalist culture brokers of a more exclusivist bent.

9.4 Ethnic and National Identities in Post 1948 South Africa

The coming to power of Malan's Nationalist party, and the subsequent growth of apartheid policy, is perhaps an obvious juncture in South African history. As will be discussed, politically ethnicised identities began to assume increasing importance from 1948 onwards, and were increasingly manipulated from 'above'. Apartheid legislation such as the 1953 Bantu Education Act, the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act, the 1959 Promotion of Bantu Self-government Act, and the 1970 Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act, all sought in various ways to manipulate divisions amongst Africans, and socially engineer ethnicised identities in order to subvert a growing African Nationalism. However, it is important to recognise continuities between the era of apartheid and earlier forms of segregation. For example, the 1927 Native

---

[69] Ibid.

Administration Act similarly sought to promote 'retribalization' in order to subvert African national political organisation.[70]

Afrikaner nationalism had itself been forged through a process of ethnic mobilisation in the first four decades of the century. However, although the gaining of power by the National party led to a monolithic construction of the Afrikaner *volk* for more than two decades, Afrikaner ideologues were never completely united, and the exigencies of the political economy, and increasing political opposition from both inside and outside the country, led to a more technicist discourse of capitalist rationality being emphasised from the late 1970s onwards, something which did not resonate with advocates of Afrikaners' 'special destiny'. In fact, the Afrikaner elite was split from the early 1970s onwards.[71] African Nationalism meanwhile had to contend with the social engineering of apartheid, and the manipulation of ethnicised identities which sought to play on the powerful emotional pull of remnant older forms of identity construction. African nationalism itself followed several paths towards modernity in this period[72], in tandem with powerful forms of political tribalism, such as a growing Zulu ethnic nationalism.

The difficulties of unifying African people within a broad, inclusive nationalism still remained in this period. Migrant labour, and the policies of segregation pursued in the first half of the twentieth century, had combined with the still powerful unifying force of remnant chiefdoms - themselves originally a focus of resistance to colonial rule - in order to produce many differing identity constructions. Popular consciousness was both shaped by, and shaped, these elements, and portrayed many of the tensions between egalitarianism and inequality which existed in pre-colonial African communities. African popular consciousnesss in this period evolved through the idiom of class, ethnicity and nationalism, intertwining these with older forms of consciousness which had evolved in rural areas, thus creating a plethora of eclectic identities. Changing identities were also inextricably gendered, even for elites. For example, Nelson Mandela implies in his autobiography that his concept of 'manhood' changed with his developing national consciousness. From initially conceiving of himself as a man through the process of male initiation in his youth, he argues intermittently throughout that he only really became a man through this widening of consciousness.[73]

---

[70] See S. Dubow, *Racial Segregation*, Chapter 4.

[71] This split was embodied in two main modes of thought, 'verligtes' (the enlightened) and ''verkramptes' (conservatives). The former sought to revise some of the petty apartheid legislation in order to make white nationalism more internationally acceptable.

[72] As evidenced by the breakaway of the Pan African Congress in the early 1960s, which sought to promte a more explicit Africanist notion of South African identity, excluding whites.

[73] N. Mandela, *Long Walk To Freedom*, London, 1995. P.36, p.p. 750-1, and *passim*.

Despite the policy of 'separate development' which grew through the 1950s and 1960s, black urbanisation still occured. The inevitable, but highly uneven and limited, growth of black capitalist consumption, individualism and the erosion of many facets of rural and migrant values, meant that many ethnicised divisions broke down in some black urban areas. Ethnicised conflict and identifications were few in the township of Langa, Cape Town in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and anthropologists working in the area at the time found that divisions based on language were rare due to the ability of Xhosa speakers (who predominated) to integrate English and Afrikaans terms when in town.[74] This reinforces the observations made by Noni Jabavu, mentioned above, who observed that languages also merged easily in the more rural context of the Eastern Cape. Language could therefore be inclusive as well as exclusive in terms of identity and social interaction. In Langa, National party policies of 'ethnic grouping' fostered most of any ethnicised cleavages which did occur: 'Left to themselves people from the same district tend to live together when they first come to town, but gradually they are absorbed into the wider community. Compulsory 'ethnic grouping' slows up the process of absorption'.[75] Rural-urban divides were found to be far more important in dividing African communities.[76]

Rural-urban divides in the 1950s and 1960s were widespread amongst many African communities and, although in Langa they did not primarily mirror ethnicised divides (although there were overlaps), in other areas these divides often corresponded with ethnicised identities which arose originally in the wake of colonial and capitalist penetration. It seems that this form of division, which was exacerbated by the longevity of the migrant labour process, was responsible for the many differing routes to modernity which Africans undertook in the first two decades of apartheid. Perhaps the example *par excellence* of this divide existed in the Eastern Cape, where it remained prevalent from colonial times until at least the 1970s.[77] However, although the rhetoric of adherents to 'Red' or 'School' ways of life presented a scenario of insoluble divisions between adherents to 'selective traditionalism' or a type of 'frozen' Victorian belief in 'Westernised' education and 'enlightenment', in practice there were many overlaps, with each sub-culture taking part in certain activities and rituals which were primarily perceived to be in the moral realm of the other.[78] This mirrors the attempts by nationalist culture brokers such as D.D.T. Jabavu to integrate certain African customs with a wider, European originating nationalist consciousness.

---

[74] M. Wilson and A. Mafeje, *Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township*, London, 1963. P.34.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid, P.35.
[77] See chapter 3.
[78] Ibid.

These increasing forms of debate regarding what best represented a people in a fast changing socio-economic climate could lend itself equally easily to either ethnic or civic nationalism. In fact, the nature of the ANC in the 1970s and 1980s, with most of its senior ideologues either exiled or imprisoned, meant that - during these decades - they became divorced from the majority of the people in terms of aspirations and grievances. As mentioned earlier, people could only mobilise identities around what was available to them. The centralised nationalism of the ANC, promoting abstract concepts of a unified South Africa, and dismissing (much as Marxist academics did in the 1970s) ethnic identities as solely the creation of apartheid and the 'homelands' policy, did not allow for an empathetic relationship with the very real identifications of many uneducated rural people, unschooled in abstract principles of democratic nationalism. Earlier civic nationalist ideologues, despite often antagonising ethnicised divisions, did try to merge nationalist ideology with localised forms of identity and custom. This, despite the fact that they still sought eventual cultural assimilation. The failure to take on board the fact that many people did mobilise around ethnic identities in order to air their grievances could lead to the capture of these people by ethnic nationalist ideologues, intent on pursuing political projects which had very little to do with democratic nationalism.

In certain areas of South Africa, ethnicised divisions existed amongst even educated African elites. Again, this often corresponded with rural-urban divides.[79] It seems reasonable to suggest tentatively that rural-urban divides were often at the root of ethnic stereotypes between different African peoples. In urban areas, 'such traditional criteria of evaluation as family line, relationship to the chief, possession of cattle, and ancestral graves...(were)...largely irrelevant for placing the stranger'.[80] Thus older forms of identification, differentiation and assimilation between different peoples and communities were breaking down. Certainly, anthropologists working among a range of different African urban communities in the 1950s and 1960s found that loyalty to the institution of chieftaincy, so long the pivot of 'tribal' society and resistance to colonial rule, was rapidly disintegrating.[81] On mine compounds, loyalty to the chieftaincy had long been eroding due to the process of migrant labour, the consequent growth of independence for young men, and the manipulation of ethnicised identities by both mine management and migrant workers themselves for mutually

---

[79] See L. Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie*, London, 1965, chp 8, which refers specifically to the case of Durban. The issue is also discussed in chapter seven of this thesis. Although set a little earlier, in the 1940s, Ezekiel Mphahlele's experience of Adams College, Durban, reinforces Kuper's points: 'I left Adams with a nagging memory of the strong spirit of tribalism that prevailed in Natal...The province is predominantly Zulu country, and the bulk of the students at Adams have always been Zulus. They did not like non-Zulu boys and girls coming to the college. They regarded us as foreigners, to be avoided. They regarded us from the Transvaal as dangerous rascals and they had the superstitious belief that we carried deadly knives in our pockets' (E. Mphalele, *Down Second Avenue*, London, 1959. P.148).

[80] L. Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie*. P.84.

[81] Ibid, p.p. 84-86; M. Wilson and A. Mafeje, *Langa*,p.p.37-38; M. Brandel-Syrier, *Reeftown Elite: A Study of Social Mobility in a Modern African Community on the Reef*, London, 1971. P.111.

exclusive reasons.[82] In this context, the institution of chieftaincy was often replaced by that of culture.[83]

Aspects of pre-colonial African moral value systems were still important to many people however, both in rural and urban contexts. Brandel-Syrier's study of a small urban 'location' in 1960s southern Transvaal found that many people expected the small educated African elite to behave in similar ways to rurally based headmen and chiefs, in terms of reciprocity and hospitality. She argues that status in the community depended not so much on any perceived prestige inherent in any high status professional job or business, but on how this status was reciprocated back into the community. What counted in the original communal society was not status as such 'but status communally expressed, status socially operative, status actualized in society. Only when status was displayed in overt conduct, in concrete and visible signs, did it 'serve' the community'.[84] She compares the expected reciprocal duties of rurally based headmen to those of urban teachers, quoting extensively from informants.

> *As with the chiefs and headmen of old: 'the headman has to put up a show. he has to make a display of social activities, that is he must give beer parties and extend hospitality. He must kill more cattle than others for his guests. He must receive more people and go and visit more people. If he does not show his headmanship in such ways, his people do not consider him a real induna'. So with the teachers. As the teachers were the first group to represent prestige in the new order, and certain problems of this new kind of status had to be first faced with reference to them, they were always quoted as examples. It was said for instance, ' A teacher must behave like a teacher, otherwise we do not recognise him as a teacher', or 'Teaching ability in itself means nothing. You must give the display due to your status as a teacher, then Africans will respect you; only then will they think you are somebody.*[85]

This very much reflects Lonsdale's concept of the expected reciprocities inherent in the pre-colonial moral economies of Africa, albeit in a more class-defined sense.[86] Later other

---

[82] See chapter 3.
[83] Ibid.
[84] M. Brandel-Syrier, *Reeftown Elite: A Study of Social Mobility in a Modern African Community on the Reef*, London, 1971, p.96.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Brandel-Syrier's study is particularly useful in that it attempts to analyse how Africans themselves perceive their structural positions in South Africa's developing capitalist economy. She demonstrates in her introduction that Africans in her area of study perceive far more subtle differences in terms of 'class' position than was perceived from 'outside', either by Europeans or

Africans followed suit, as more professions became open to Africans to suit the needs of the capitalist economy.

Earlier members of the African elite, such as Jabavu, Plaatje, and others, also endeavoured to support this form of societal reciprocity. However, the elite in Brandel-Syrier's study was increasingly cutting itself off from community service and contact with people situated in other socio-economic groupings.[87] This reflected an increasing class consciousness, but set within a particularly Southern African social setting. The upper echelons of Reeftown society were becoming increasingly divorced from the concerns of the majority of the African population, and thus began to lose the latter's respect-respect being one of the central pillars of rural moral values. This may also have made the growing elites more available for incorporation into the de-politicised middle-class 'buffer zone' created by Botha in the 1980s in order to divert a growing African nationalist consciousness. The manipulations of chiefly genealogies, and the institutions of chieftaincies themselves, by the apartheid regime also evoked various responses from African peoples. Many rural Africans still identified with the institution of the chieftaincy well into the 1970s, and many still do so today. This was despite the fact that the policy of 'separate development' promulgated by the National party manipulated chiefly institutions in order to 'retribalise' Africans, and avoid both a complete proletarianisation of the black workforce and subvert the growth of African nationalism. The support for the chieftaincy from rural people did not, however, necessarily entail support for the National party's manipulations of it. Pre-colonial chieftaincies involved reciprocity and accountability to the people, although this is not to suggest that they could not be autocratic and harsh.[88] The apartheid regime rode rough-shod over this fact, attempting to create a rigidified institution. The fact that many rural Africans regretted this imposition as an indication of the eventual demise of the chieftaincy, demonstrates not only their opposition to apartheid, but also that they centred this opposition around rural identities and ethnicities rooted in the pre-colonial era.

The survival of loyalties emanating from pre-colonial times also lent themselves to African ethnic culture brokers. The historical development of Zulu nationalism has been dealt with in

---

other Africans. Furthermore, as is demonstrated by the quote in the main text, she also argues that culturally-based status is just as important in 'Reeftown' Africans' self-definition as a purely structural class analysis. Interestingly, she utilises the life-history approach which later social historians such as Moodie and Beinart also utilise. this seems to bring out the self-perceptions of Africans without conflating their experiences to that of an abstract, structural concept of class position. The attempt to 'let people speak for themselves' seems to be one of the major contributions of radical social historiography in the late 1980s, and in this sense can be seen to have followed in the tradition of anthropological works such as that of Brandel-Syrier, Hellman, the Mayers and others. It is important to note, however, that these forms of anthropological approaches were in the minority in South Africa until recently.

[87] M. Brandel-Syrier, *Reeftown Elite*, p.295.

[88] For example see the following: J. Comaroff, 'Chiefship in a South African Homeland: A Case Study of the Tshidi Chiefdom of Bophuthatswana', in *JSAS*, Vol 1, No 1, 1974; S. Jingoes, *A Chief is a Chief by the People*, Chps 7 and 8; W. Beinart, 'Chieftaincy and the Concept of Articulation'; S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism and the State in TwentiethCentury Natal*,, London. 1986.

an earlier chapter, and therefore will not be reiterated here. However, it is important to re-emphasise the fact that this was not just an imposition of constructed ethnic identity from 'above'.[89] The fact that the ANC only belately addressed the fact that *Inkatha* could represent real grievances of poverty stricken people demonstrated its inability to address the issues confronting black South Africans on a day to day basis. Abstract concepts of democratic nation-building did not take fully into account local grievances, which often hardened into ethnicised conflict. This was perhaps best illustrated in the conflict between township youth and hostel dwellers, both in the 1976 Soweto uprising, and the later insurrections of the 1980s. Perhaps in this context, the 'Black Consciousness' movement was more successful than the ANC. For it did attempt to link older forms of African custom and identifications to a more pan-African identity, whilst simultaneously attempting to overcome the sense of inferiority engendered by apartheid ideology and earlier missionary proseletyzing.

Afrikaners themselves had been more rapidly proletarianised than Africans, and the gaining of power by the National party in 1948 seemed to have ensured the survival of the *volk*. The 1960s and 1970s saw a rapid increase in the rate of urbanisation for Afrikaners, and whites generally. European and American consumer patterns also permeated deeply. The apartheid period was 'one of suburbanization and the spread of a rather derivative consumer culture spliced on to the gnarled old settler stock'.[90] Although the gaining of Afrikaner wealth and security was one of the main aims of early apartheid culture brokers, and this was now achieved, this may have been a somewhat pyrrhic victory. Despite the fact that there has been little research into the contemporary consciousness of Afrikaners, it could be argued that this increase in urbanisation, and the attendent increase in wealth and entry into a society dominated by consumerism, laid the groundwork for a reformulation of Afrikaner ethnic identity. Many urbanised middle-class Afrikaners in the 1960s and 1970s still held to apartheid, and defended its racist tenets, but the considerable growth in wealth certainly influenced the changes which later resulted from international sanctions and internal unrest within the country. The *verlig/verkramp* split during the late 1960s to the 1980s, economic stagnation during the 1980s and international pressure in the aftermath of the Cold War, all combined with this growth in wealth so that some Afrikaners were willing to accept the end of apartheid. Furthermore, they were willing to undergo a painful redefinition of Afrikaner identity in order to protect their privileged position. By the 1980s apartheid had become an economic and social obstacle to many Afrikaners seeking to protect their economically privileged position. Many were therefore prepared to undergo a painful redefinition of Afrikaner identity.

---

[89] Many pro-ANC academics made this mistaken assumption. For just one example, see Mzala, *Buthelezi:Chief With a Double Agenda*, London, 1988. Mzala recognises no form of unforced support for the ethnic nationalism represented by *Inkatha*. However, as Marks argues, reconstructions of the past have a powerful emotional pull on people, including young men and women, especially in a climate of social poverty and political unrest (personal interview, May 1996).

[90] W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa*, P.173. See chapter 7 of the same work for an insightful overview of South African economy and societies in the 1960s and 1970s.

It was for these reasons that de Klerk sought to dismantle apartheid in the early 1990s. This very act was an attempt to ensure the ethnic survival and privileges of Afrikaner identity.[91]

The demise of apartheid has not led to an immediate erosion of ethnic identifications in South Africa. It is interesting to note that both the National party and the ANC are now accepting the need to capture the 'ethnic' vote. The Deputy Minister of Constitutional Affairs, Mohammed Valli Moosa, was quoted in a recent newspaper article as follows:

> *If we make the mistake made by the left in many other parts of the world - simply to ignore ethnicity or claim it does not exist - we run the risk of ethnicity rearing its head in a divisive form, as in other African countries and central Europe.*[92]

Ths same article has as its centre piece a photo of de Klerk, replete with Sotho blanket and hat, promoting the National party's policy of cultural pluralism. It is one of the ironies of South African history that the universalist, civic nationalism espoused by the ANC, is now attempting to come to terms with ethnic identities, at the same time as the National party is attempting to promote a concept of equality through cultural pluralism only a few years after promoting ethnicised divisions through the 'homelands policy' (although cultural pluralism still retains echoes of separation of peoples due to ethnic categorisation). The effects of migrant labour, apartheid and remnant pre-colonial concepts of identity have all contributed to the tenacity of ethnic identifications. Intertwining with other forms of identity construction, they have represented a myriad of different paths to modernity in twentieth century South Africa. 'Selective traditionalism' has been used by both elite ethnic culture brokers such as Mangosuthu Buthelezi, in order to pursue his own political agenda and mask structural economic, class and gender inequalities, but also by many ordinary people. The process of migrant labour has ensured that people can revert to supporting the institution of chieftaincy, and uphold ethnic identifications as a last existential redoubt in a fast-changing socio-economic climate in which the ANC may, or may not, be able to deliver the promises of rectifying the structural inequalities which exist. Political tribalist versions of ethnic identity have entrenched themselves in the latter half of the twentieth century, but they may not be perceived as undemocratic and oppressive by people who are looking for a way out of the structural economic impasse which is the legacy of colonial rule, apartheid and the particular path of global economic development. Identifying with the structures of remnant chiefdoms in

---

[91] H. Giliomee, ' "Broedertwis": Intra-Afrikaner Conflicts in the Transition from Apartheid', *African Affairs*, Vol 91, 1992. Also see D. O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The Apartheid State and the Politics of the National Party, 1948-1994*, Randburg, 1996, although O'Meara does place such stress on ethnic survival as a factor in these reforms.

[92] *Mail and Guardian*, May 24 1996, P.27.

an ethnicised sense allows for the upkeeping of a form of personal integrity in uncertain times.

New forms of contemporary ethnic identifications are also developing throughout the world, and South Africa is no exception to their development. Many of these forms of identity are linked to a growing globalised consumer culture which tends towards standardisation and media representation of ethnicity. Some of these identity constructs are shallow. For example, some elements of the middle classes in the United States have attached themselves to selected facets of ethnic symbolism in order to 'spice up' a rather standardised, uniform lifestyle. 'Ethnic chic' has become increasingly popular in the United States, producing a shallow form of voluntary, symbolic ethnic identification, which can be selected and dropped at will. Quoting Delbanco, Pieterse illustrates this form of superficial ethnicisation with respect to contemporary 'Italian-Americans' rather well:

> *The ancestors of people who (now) wear the "Kiss me, I'm Italian" T-Shirt never thought of themselves as such-but as Sicilian, or Calabrian, or Neapolitan-and would be mystified by their 'Italian-American' children...Likewise the Italian food served to visitors at home may be fashionable north Italian cuisine quite unfamiliar to their ancestors.*[93]

The fact that ethnicity is still a political hot potato in South Africa perhaps precludes the development of this form of 'Hollywoodised' ethnicity wholesale, but media celebratory portrayals of certain ethnic groups contain facets of this form of identity formation (although not in such a shallow sense). Recent ethnic identity construction in West Africa has involved Non-Governmental Organisations and some commercial companies, which attempt to pursue a business policy which takes into account environmental and human rights concerns. Survival International and The Body Shop are just two examples. Both effectively utilise media sources in order to promote what they portray as the positive aspects of ethnic mobilisation and identification, but in the process sometimes inadvertently construct forms of celebratory, essentialised forms of ethnicity. The recent interest amongst these forms of organisations regarding the plight of the Ogoni people in Nigeria, who at the time of writing are being systematically exploited by the oil company Shell, provide two examples.[94] Probably the

---

[93] J. Nederveen Pieterse, 'Varieties of Ethnic Politics and Ethnicity Discourse', in E. Wilmsen and P. McAllister (eds), *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power*, London, 1996, p.31. Pieterse is part quoting A. Delbanco, 'Pluralism and its Discontents', *Transition*, Vol 55, 1992.

[94] A. Campbell, 'Ethical Ethnicity: A Critique', *JMAS*, Vol 35, No 1, 1997. Campbell is extremely critical of the work of these organisations in this article, arguing that they promote a version of the colonial myth of the 'Noble Savage'. However, this completely ignores the very valuable work that these organisations carry out in conjunction with the people they work with.

best-known similar case in southern Africa is the example of the people of Namaqualand in the Northwest Cape. Many of the inhabitants here have deliberately invoked an essentialised pre-colonial Khoikhoi identity in order to retain access to land. The media has sympathetically constructed and disseminated this form of essentialised ethnicisation.[95] There are similar examples among the so-called 'Bushmen' of Botswana.[96]

In some respects these forms of ethnic mobilisation contain positive elements, as outlined by Cynthia Enloe.[97] However they can challenge the legitimacy of the national state within which they exist. This may not be a detrimental factor in some instances, as at least one prominent Africanist historian has recently argued.[98] However, entrenching of ethnicised identities in South Africa is problematic, due to the legacy of the apartheid state. These forms of identification can also open up opportunities for politically tribalist manipulation of ethnicity by ethnic entrepreneurs. Media portrayals of Zulus as 'Noble Savages' could promote the agendas of politicians such as Mangusutho Buthelezi, whilst constructing a form of ethnic chic. For example the 1986 film *Shaka Zulu*, which simultaneously lent support to the apartheid policies of the National Party and Buthelezi's reified version of Zulu identity, also provided a powerful symbol around which young black Americans defined themselves.[99] Although the latter is a problematic example of ethnic chic, as it is not just based on middle class selection of ethnic identity, the example of *Shaka Zulu* does illustrate that media portrayals can bolster a number of diverse interests. Ethnic chic can be subverted by ethnic entrepreneurs, and western human rights and environmentalist groups could inadvertently contribute to this form of political tribalism through their simplistic interpretations of various ethnic identities. As environmentalism becomes an increasingly important issue in an over-populated and over-polluted world, agencies such as Survival International and Amnesty International may inadvertently become ethnic culture brokers themselves, thus bolstering the very exclusivism which they vehemently oppose.

It may be that future ethnic identity constructions will evolve along these themes of environmentalism and development. These forms of ethnic identity reformulation also illustrate the main theoretical thrust of this thesis. Ethnic and nationalist identities cannot be rigidly classified in terms of 'civic' and 'ethnic' nationalism. For both grow from the same social, cultural and economic seedbed. Similarly, moral ethnicity and political tribalism are

---

[95] J. Sharp, 'Ethnogenesis and Ethnic Mobilization: A Comparative Perspective on a South African Dilemma', in E. Wilmsen and P. McAllister (eds), *Ethnic Premises.*

[96] A. Campbell, 'Ethical Ethnicity', p.61.

[97] See chapter 2.

[98] B. Davidson, *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State*, Oxford, 1992.

[99] P. Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood: Exploring the Jungles of Cinema's South Africa*, Ohio, 1996, p.p. 167-182. Recent popular histories also distort and esentialise South African identities: see, for example, S. Taylor, *Shaka's Children: A History of the Zulu People*, London, 1995. These forms of history should also serve as a salutary lesson to academia that it is important to produce works which reach the wider general public and not just the 'Ivory Towers' of academe, and thus challenge the dubious essentialism of the former.

intimately connected. There were, and are, constant interconnections and fluid boundaries between and amongst ethnicised identities in southern Africa during the twentieth century. The main changes seem to have involved an increase in scale, as the moral ethnic identifications of the early twentieth century metamorphosised into the various forms of political tribalism, and civic and ethnic nationalisms of later decades. These were constantly intertwined with other forms of classification, such as gender and class, and are continuously evolving. The malleability of ethnic and nationalist identities suggests that marxian theories which argue the global economy will eventually erode their relevence are mistaken.[100] They are likely to remain prominent factors of identification for a considerable time to come, although it is difficult to predict in what context, and this is anyway beyond the realms of historical investigation.

---

[100] Eric Hobsbawm is a major proponent of the argument that nationalism and ethnicity will become increasingly irrelevent in a growing global, consumerist society. See E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge, 1990, and E. Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991*, London, 1994. Proponents of similar views in the southern African context have been discussed throughout this thesis.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Secondary Sources: Books and Edited Collections

H. Adam and H.Giliomee
1979 — *Ethnic Power Mobilised: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven,YaleUniversity Press).

N. Alexander
1985 — *Sow The Wind: Contemporary Speeches.* (Braamfontein, Skotaville).

B. Anderson
1994 2nd ed — *Imagined Communities.* (London, Verso).

H. Ashton
1967 (2nd ed). — *The Basuto: A Social Study of Traditional and Modern Lesotho.* (London, Oxford University Press).

A. Astrow
1983 — *Zimbabwe: A Revolution That Lost Its Way?* (London, Zed Press).

M. Banton
1983 — *Racial and Ethnic Competition.* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

J. Bardill and J. Cobbe
1985 — *Lesotho: Dilemmas of Dependence in Southern Africa.* (London, Gower).

J.C. Bayart
1993 — *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly.* (Essex, Longman).

W.Beinart and C. Bundy
1987 — *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa.* (London, James Currey).

W. Beinart, S. Dubow (eds)
1995 — *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth Century South Africa.* (London, Routledge).

W. Beinart
1994 — *Twentieth Century South Africa.* (Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press).

W. Beinart, P. Delius, S. Trapido (eds)
1986 — *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South Africa 1850-1930.* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press).

S. Bekker
1993 — *Ethnicity in Focus.* (Natal, Indicator South Africa).

I. Berger
1992
Threads of Solidarity: Women in South African Industry, 1900-1980. (London, James Currey).

A.I. Berglund
1976
Zulu Thought-Patterns and Symbolism. (London, C. Hurst and Co).

B. Berman, J. Lonsdale
1992
Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa. Book Two - Violence and Ethnicity. (London, James Currey).

S. Biko
1978
I Write What I Like. (London, Bowerdean Press).

D. Birmingham, P. Martin (eds)
1992
History of Central Africa, Vol 2. (London, Longman).

P. Bonner, I. Hofmeyer,
D. James, T. Lodge (eds)
1989
Holding Their Ground: Class, Locality and Culture in Nineteenth And Twentieth Century South Africa. (Johannesburg, Ravan Press).

B. Bozzoli (ed)
1987
Class, Community and Conflict: South African Perspectives. (Johannesburg, Ravan Press).

B. Bozzoli
1991
Women of Phokeng: Consciousness, Life Strategy and Migrancy in South Africa, 1900-1983. (London, James Currey).

M. Brandel-Syrier
1971
Reeftown Elite: A Study of Social Mobility in a Modern African Community on the Reef. (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).

C. Brownlie
1977 (orig 1916)
Reminiscences of Kafir Life and History. (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press).

A.T. Bryant
1929
Olden Times in Zululand and Natal. (London, Longman).

H. Bucher
1980
Spirits and Power: An Analysis of Shona Cosmology. (Cape Town, Oxford University Press).

C. Bundy
1979
The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry. (London, Heinemann).

S. Burman
1981

Chiefdom Politics and Alien Law. (London, Macmillan Press).

S. Burman, P. Reynolds (eds)
1986

Growing Up in a Divided Society: The Contexts of Childhood in South Africa. (Johannesburg, Ravan Press).

E. Casalis
1965 (1st ed 1861)

The Basutos or Twenty Three Years in South Africa. (CapeTown, C. Struik).

P. Cassell
1993

The Giddens Reader. (London, MacMillan).

N. Charton
1980

Ciskei: A South African Homeland. (London, Croom Helm).

A.P. Cheater
1989

Social Anthropology: An Alternative Introduction. (London, Unwin Hyman).

W. Cobbett and R. Cohen (eds)
1988

Popular Struggles in South Africa. (London, James Currey).

J. Cock
1984

Maids and Madams. (Johannesburg, Ravan Press).

A. Cohen
1969

Custom and Politics in Urban Africa. (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).

A. Cohen
1974

Two-Dimensional Man. (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).

L. Colley
1994

Britons. Forging the Nation, 1707-1837. (London, Pimlico).

J. and J. Comaroff
1992

Ethnography and the Historical Imagination. (Oxford, Westview Press).

J. and J. Comaroff
1991

Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa. Vol One. (London, University of Chicago Press).

J. and J. Comaroff (eds)
1993

Modernity and Its Malcontents: Ritual and Power in Postcolonial Africa. (London, University of Chicago Press).

W. Conner
1994 *Ethno-Nationalism: The Quest for Understanding.* (Princeton, Princeton University Press).

N. Cope
1993 *To Bind the Nation: Solomon KaDinuzulu and Zulu Nationalism 1913-1933.* (Pietermaritzburg, Univ. of Natal Press).

D. Coplan
1985 *In Township Tonight! South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre.* (London, Longman).

D. Coplan
1994 *In the Time of Cannibals.* (London, University of Chicago Press).

D. Crummey (ed)
1986 *Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa.* (London, James Currey).

M. Damane and P. Sanders (eds)
1974 *Lithoko: Sotho Praise Poems.* (Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press).

B. Davidson
1992 *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State.* (London, James Currey).

P. Davis
1996 *In Darkest Hollywood: Exploring the Jungles of Cinema's South Africa.* (Randberg, Ravan Press).

M. Douglas
1969 *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo.* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).

S. Dubow
1989 *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa, c. 1919-1936.* (London, MacMillan).

S. Dubow
1995 *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa.* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

A.M. Duggan-Cronin
1933 *The Bantu Tribes of South Africa; Reproductions of Photographic Studies. Vol 2, Section 3, Sub-Group , the Southern Basutho.* (Cambridge, Deighton, Bell & Co).

A.M. Duggan-Cronin
1938 *The Bantu Tribes of South Africa; Reproductions of Photographic Studies. Vol 3, Section 3, The Zulu.* (Cambridge, Deighton, Bell & Co).

A.M. Duggan-Cronin
1949

The Bantu Tribes of South Africa; Reproductions of Photographic Studies. Vol 3, Section 2, The Mpondo and Mpondomise. (Cambridge, Deighton, Bell & Co).

R. Edgar
1986

Prophets with Honour: A Documentary History of Lekhotla La Bafo. (Johannesburg, Ravan Press).

J. Eicher (ed)
1995

Dress and Ethnicity: Change Across Space and Time. (Oxford, Berg Publishers).

E. Eldredge
1993

A South African Kingdom: The Pursuit of Security in Nineteenth Century Lesotho. (Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press).

D. Ellenberger
1912

History of the Basuto Ancient and Modern. (London, Caxton).

C. Enloe
1986 (1st ed 1973)

Ethnic Conflict and Political Development. (London, University Press of America).

A.L. Epstein
1958

Politics in an Urban African Community. (Manchester, Manchester University Press).

A.L. Epstein
1978

Ethos and Identity: Three Studies in Ethnicity. (London, Tavistock Publications).

A.L. Epstein (ed)
1979

The Craft of Social Anthropology. (Oxford, Pergammon Press).

A.L. Epstein
1981

Urbanisation and Kinship. (London, Academic Press).

T. Eriksen
1993

Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives. (London, Pluto Press).

N. Etherington (ed)
1992

Peace, Politics and Violence in the New South Africa. (London, Hans Zell Publishers).

K. Fields
1985

Revival and Rebellion in Colonial Central Africa. (Princeton University Press).

F. Fanon
1965

The Wretched of the Earth. (London, Macgibbon and Kee).

J. Furnivall
1948 *Colonial Policy and Practice.* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

E. Gellner
1983 *Nations and Nationalism.* (Oxford, Blackwell).

A. Giddens
1990 *The Consequences of Modernity.* (Cambridge, Polity Press).

A. Giddens
1991 *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age.* (Cambridge, Polity Press).

N. Glazer, D. Moynihan
1975 *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience.* (Massachusetts, Harvard University Press).

M. Gluckman
1958 *Analysis of a Social Situation in Modern Zululand.* (Manchester, Manchester Univ. Press).

V. Goddard, J. Llobera, C. Shore (eds)
1994 *The Anthropology of Europe: Identities and Boundaries in Conflict.* (Oxford, Berg Publishers).

P.H. Gulliver (ed)
1969 *Tradition and Transition in East Africa.* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).

J. Guy
1979 *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom.* (London, Longman Group).

W.D. Hammond-Tooke
1962 *Bhaca Society.* (London, Oxford University Press).

W.D. Hammond-Tooke (ed)
1974 *The Bantu-Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa.* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).

W.D. Hammond-Tooke
1981 *Boundaries and Belief: The Structure of A Sotho World View.* (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press).

J. Hanlon
1986 *Beggar your Neighbours: Apartheid Power in South Africa.* (London, James Currey).

P. Harries
1994 *Work, Culture, and Identity: Migrant Labourers in Mozambique and South Africa, 1860-1910.* (London, James Currey).

N. Haysom
1986 *Apartheid's Private Army: the Rise of Right-Wing Vigilantes in South Africa.* (London, James Currey).

S. Heald
1989
Controlling Anger: The Sociology of Gisu Violence. (Manchester, Manchester University Press).

E. Hellman
1940
Problems of Urban Bantu Youth. (Johannesburg, South African Institute of Race Relations).

E. Hellmann
1969 (2nd impression)
Rooiyard: A Sociological Survey of an Urban Native Slum Yard. (Manchester, Manchester University Press).

H. Hendrickson (ed)
1996
Clothing and Difference: Embodied Identities in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa. (London, Duke University Press).

E. Hobsbawm
1991
Nations and Nationalism Since 1780. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

E. Hobsbawm
1994
Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914-1991. (London, Michael Joseph).

E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds)
1983
The Invention of Tradition. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

T. Hodgkin (ed)
1969
Nationalism in Colonial Africa. (New York, New York Univ. Press).

D. Horowitz
1985
Ethnic Groups in Conflict. (California, University of California Press).

M. Hunter
1964
Reaction to Conquest. (London, Oxford Univ. Press).

M. Ignatieff
1994
Blood and Belonging: Journies into the New Nationalism. (London, Routledge).

K. Ingham
1990
Politics in Southern Africa. (London, Routledge).

D.D.T. Jabavu
1921
The Black Problem. (Lovedale, Lovedale Press).

N. Jabavu
1963
The Ochre People. (London, John Murray).

D. Jeater
1993
Marriage, Perversion and Power. (Oxford, Oxford University Press).

S. Jingoes
1975 *A Chief is a Chief by the People.* (London, Oxford University Press).

J. Kellas
1991 *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity.* (London, Macmillan).

D. Kidd
1925 *The Essential Kafir.* (London, A. and C. Black).

D. Kidd
1969 *Kafir Socialism.* (New York, Negro Universities Press).

E. Krige
1965 *The Social System of the Zulus.* (London, Longman).

E and J. Krige
1965 *The Realm of a Rain-Queen: A Study of the Pattern of Lovedu Society.* (London, Oxford University Press).

N. Kriger
1992 *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices.* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

A. Kuper
1982 *Wives For Cattle: Bridewealth and Marriage in Southern Africa.* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).

L. Kuper
1965 *An African Bourgeoisie: Race, Class and Politics in South Africa.* (New Haven, Yale University Press).

L. Kuper, M.G. Smith (eds)
1969 *Pluralism in Africa.* (Los Angeles, University of California Press).

P.C. Lloyd
1967 *Africa in Social Change.* (London, Penguin).

T. Lodge
1983 *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945.* (London, Longman).

L. Longmore
1959 *The Dispossessed: A Study of the Sex-Life of Bantu Women in Urban Areas in and Around Johannesburg.* (London, Jonathan Cape).

N. Mandela
1995 *Long Walk to Freedom.* (London, Abacus).

N. Chabani Manganyi, A. Du Toit (eds)
1990 *Political Violence and the Struggle in South Africa.* (London, MacMillan).

G. Mare
1993 *Ethnicity and Politics in South Africa.* (London, Zed Books).

S. Marks
1970 *Reluctant Rebellion: The 1906-8 Disturbances in Natal.* (Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press).

S. Marks
1986 *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth-Century Natal.* (London, John Hopkins University Press).

S. Marks
1995 *The Tradition of Non-Racism in South Africa.* (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press).

S. Marks and A. Atmore (eds)
1980 *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa.* (London, Longman).

S. Marks and R. Rathbone (eds)
1985 *Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa: African Class Formation, Culture and Consciousness 1870-1930.* (London, Longman).

S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds)
1993 *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa.* (London, Longman).

S. Marks and D. Engels (eds)
1994 *Contesting Colonial Hegemony: State ans Society in Africa and India.* (London, British Academic Press).

P. Mayer
1971 2nd ed *Townsmen or Tribesmen.* (Oxford, Oxford University Press).

P. Mayer (ed)
1972 *Socialization: The Approach from Social Anthropology.* (London, Tavistock Publications).

P. Mayer (ed)
1980 *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society.* (Cape Town, Oxford University Press).

M. Mead
1935 *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies.* (London, Routledge).

J. Clyde Mitchell
1959 *The Kalela Dance.* (Manchester, Manchester University Press).

D. Moodie, V. Ndatshe
1994 *Going For Gold: Men, Mines and Migration.* (London, University of California Press).

D. Moodie
1975

The Rise of Afrikanerdom: Power, Apartheid, and the Afrikaner Civil Religion. (London, Heinemann).

H. Moore
1994

A Passion For Difference: Essays in Anthropology and Gender. (Oxford, Blackwell Publishers).

N. Mostert
1993

Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People. (London, Pimlico).

E. Mphalele
1984

Down Second Avenue. (London, Faber and Faber).

C. Murray
1981

Families Divided: The Impact of Migrant Labour in Lesotho. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

C. Murray
1992

Black Mountain: Land, Class and Power in the Eastern Orange Free State - 1880s to 1980s. (Edinburgh, Edinburgh Univ. Press).

M. Murray
1994

The Revolution Deferred: the Painful Birth of Post-Apartheid South Africa. (London, Verso).

Mzala
1988

Gatsha Buthelezi: Chief with a Double Agenda. (London, Zed Books).

T. Nairn
1977

The Break-Up of Britain. (London, NLB).

J. Naubright and T. Chandler (eds)
1996

Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity. (London, Frank Cass).

A. Norton
1993

Reflections on Political Identity. (London, John Hopkins University Press).

D. O'Meara
1996

Forty Lost Years: The Apartheid State and the Politics of the National Party, 1948-1994. (Randburg, Ravan Press).

J.D. Omer-Cooper
1994 (2nd ed)

History of Southern Africa. (London, James Currey).

B.A. Pauw
1975

Christianity and Xhosa Tradition. (London, Oxford University Press).

J. Pettman
1992

Living in the Margins: Racism, Sexism and Feminism in Australia. (New South Wales, Allen and Unwin).

M. Ramphele
1991

Restoring the Land: Environment and Change in Post - Apartheid South Africa. (London, Panos).

T. Ranger
1975

Dance and Society in Eastern Africa, 1890-1970. (London, Heinemann).

T. Ranger
1985

The Invention of Tribalism in Zimbabwe. (Gweru, Mambo Press).

T. Ranger
1985

Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe. (London, James Currey).

T. Ranger, O. Vaughan (eds)
1993

Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth-Century Africa. (London, MacMillan).

T. Ranger, R. Werbner (eds)
1996

Postcolonial Identities in Africa. (London, James Currey).

D. Reader
1966

Zulu Tribe in Transition. (Manchester, Manchester University Press).

V. Reynolds, V. Falger, I. Vine (eds)
1987

The Sociobiology of Ethnocentrism. (Beckenham, Croom Helm).

B. Roberts
1987

Cecil Rhodes: Flawed Colossus. (London, Hamilton).

E.S. Sachs
1957

Rebels Daughters. (London, MacGibbon and Kee).

E. Said
1991

Orientalism. (London, Penguin).

P. Sanders
1975

Moshoeshoe: Chief of the Sotho. (London, Heinemann).

J. Saul
1979

The State and Revolution in Eastern Africa. (London, Heinemann).

R. Schire
1992

Adapt or Die: The End of White Politics in South Africa. (London, C. Hurst).

J. Scott
1988

Gender and the Politics of History. (New York, Columbia Univ. Press).

D.W.T. Shropshire
1970 (1st ed 1946)
Primitive Marriage and European Law. (London, Frank Cass).

A. Smith
1971
Theories of Nationalism. (London, Duckworth).

A. Smith
1986
The Ethnic Origins of Nations. (Oxford, Blackwell).

A. Smith
1991
National Identity. (London, Penguin).

A. Smith, J. Hutchinson (eds)
1994
Nationalism. (Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press).

A. Smith, J. Hutchinson (eds)
1996
Ethnicity. (Oxford, Oxford University Press).

R. Southall
1982
South Africa's Transkei: The Political Economy of an 'Independent' Bantustan. (London, Heinemann).

T. Spear, R. Waller (eds)
1993
Being Maasai. (London, James Currey).

A. Spiegel and P. McAllister (eds)
1991
Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa. (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press).

L. Switzer
1993
Power and Resistance in an African Society: The Ciskei Xhosa and the Making of South Africa. (Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin Press).

M. Tamarkin
1996
Cecil Rhodes and the Cape Afrikaners: The Imperial Colossus and the Colonial Parish Pump. (London, Frank Cass).

S. Taylor
1995
Shaka's Children: A History of the Zulu People. (London, Harper Collins).

L. Thompson
1975
Survival in Two Worlds: Moshoeshoe of Lesotho, 1786-1870. (Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press).

L. Thompson
1985
The Political Mythology of Apartheid. (London, Yale University Press).

L. Thompson, J. Butler (eds)
1975
Change In Contemporary South Africa. (Berkeley, University of California Press).

E. Tonkin, M. McDonald, M. Chapman (eds) 1989 — *History and Ethnicity.* (London, Routledge).

L. Vail (ed) 1989 — *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa.* (London, James Currey).

M. Van Binsbergen 1981 — *Religious Change in Zambia.* (London, Paul Kegan).

C. Van Onselen 1982 — *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914. Vol 1, New Babylon.* (London, Longman).

C. Van Onselen 1982 — *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914. Vol 2, New Nineveh.* (London, Longman).

A. Vilikazi 1962 — *Zulu Transformations: A Study of the Dynamics of Social Change.* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press).

C. Walker (ed) 1990 — *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945.* (London, James Currey).

E. Walter 1969 — *Terror and Resistance: A Study of Political Violence.* (New York, Oxford University Press).

C. Webb, J. Wright (eds) 1976-1987 — *The James Stuart Archive of Recorded Oral Evidence Relating to the History of the Zulu and Neighbouring Peoples-4 Vols*, (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press).

C. Webb, J. Wright (eds) 1978 — *A Zulu King Speaks.* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press).

J. Weeks 1986 — *Sexuality.* (Plymouth, Tavistock Publications).

D. Welsh 1971 — *The Roots of Segregation: Native Policy in Natal, 1845-1910,* (London, Oxford University Press).

M. Whisson, M. West (ed) 1975 — *Religion and Social Change in Southern Africa: Anthropological Essays in Honour of Monica Wilson.* (London, Rex Collings).

J. Whiteside, J. Ayliffe 1912 — *History of the Abambo, Generally Known as Fingos.* (Transkei, Butterworth Press).

C.S. Whitaker
1970

The Politics of Tradition: Continuity and Change in Northern Nigeria, 1946-1966. (Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press).

B. Willan
1984

Solomon Plaatje: South African Nationalist, 1876-1932. (London, Heinemann).

E. Wilmsen, P. McAllister (eds)
1996

The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power. (London, Univ of Chicago Press).

F. Wilson, B.F. Frederiksen (eds)
1995

Ethnicity, Gender and The Subversion of Nationalism. (London, Frank Cass).

F. Wilson, M. Ramphele (eds)
1989

Uprooting Poverty. (New York, Norton).

G. Wilson, M. Wilson
1968, 3rd ed (1st ed 1945)

The *Analysis of Social Change: Based on Observations in Central Africa.* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

M. Wilson, A. Mafeje.
1963

Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township. (London, Oxford University Press).

M. Wilson
1971

Religion and the Transformation of Society: A Study in Social Change in Africa. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

P. Worsley
1984

The Three Worlds: Culture and Development. (London,Weidenfield and Nicholson).

N. Yuval-Davis, F. Anthias (eds)
1989

Woman - Nation - State. (London, MacMillan Press).

Secondary Sources: Articles and Papers

J. Aitchison
1992

'Interpreting Violence: The Struggle to Understand the Natal Conflict', *The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries Vol 18 No 44.*

H. Adam and H. Moodley
1992

'Political Violence, "Tribalism" and Inkatha', *JMAS Vol 30 No 1.*

H. Adam
1995

'The Politics of Ethnic Identity: Comparing South Africa', *JSAS Vol 18 No 3.*

J.F. Ade Ajayi
1993

Book Review of T. Ranger and O. Vaughan (eds), 'Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth Century South Africa', *JAH Vol 34 No 1.*

A. Ahmed
1995

' "Ethnic Cleansing": A Metaphor for our Time?', *Ethnic and Racial Studies Vol18 No.1.*

J. Alexander
1992

Book Review of N. Kriger 'Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices', *JSAS Vol 18 No 2.*

L. Bank
1994

'Angry Men and Working Women: Gender, Violence and Economic Change in QwaQwa in the 1980s', *African Studies Vol 53 No 1.*

W. Beinart
1992

'Political and Collective Violence in Southern African Historiography', *JSAS Vol 18 No 3.*

S. Bekker, C. Manona
1992

'Pondoland Looking North to Natal: Common Economic Interests or Different Regional Loyalties?', *JCAS Vol 11 No 2.*

V. Bickford-Smith
1995

'Black Ethnicities, Communities and Political Expression in Late Victorian Cape Town', *JAH Vol 36 No 3.*

K.M. Blee
1996

'Becoming a Racist: Women in Contemporary Ku Klux Klan and Neo-Nazi Groups', *Gender and Society Vol 10 No 6.*

A. Booth
1992

' "European Courts Protect Women and Witches": Colonial Law Courts as Redistributors of Power in Swaziland', *JSAS Vol 18 No 2.*

D. Booth
1996

'Mandela and Amabokoboko: The Political and Linguistic Nationalisation of South Africa?', *JMAS Vol 34 No 3.*

B. Bozzoli
1983

'Marxism, Feminism and South African Studies', *JSAS Vol 9 No 2.*

B. Bozzoli, P. Delius
1991

'Introduction', *Radical History Review: Special Edition, Vols 46/7.*

K. Breckenridge
1990

'Migrancy, Crime and Faction Fighting: the Role of the Isitshozi in the Development of Ethnic Organisations in the Compounds', *JSAS Vol 16 No 1.*

R. Brubaker
1995

'Aftermaths of Empire and the Unmixing of Peoples: Historical and Comparative Perspectives', *Ethnic and Racial Studies Vol 18 No2.*

A. Campbell
1997

'Ethical Ethnicity. A Critique', *JMAS Vol 35 No 1.*

C. Campbell
1992

'Learning to Kill? Masculinity, the Family and Violence in Natal', *JSAS Vol 18 No 3*

C. Campbell, G. Mare, C. Walker
1995

'Evidence for an Ethnic Identity in the Life Histories of Zulu-Speaking Durban Township Residents', *JSAS Vol 21 No 2.*

J. Carruthers
1989

'Creating a National Park, 1910 to 1926', *JSAS Vol 15 No 2.*

Sun-Ki Chai
1996

'A Theory of Ethnic Group Boundaries', *Nations and Nationalism Vol 2 No 2.*

J. Clegg
1981

'Ukubuyisa Isidumbu - "Bringing Back the Body": An Examination into the Ideology of Vengeance in the Msinga and Mpofana Rural Locations, 1882-1944', *Working Papers in Southern African Studies, Vol 2.* P. Bonner (ed). Ravan Press Ltd. Braamfontain 1981.

L. Cloete
1992

'Domestic Strategies of Rural Transkeian Women', *Working Paper No 54, ISER, Rhodes University.*

J. Cobbing
1988

'The Mfecane as Alibi: thoughts on the Battles of Dithakong and Mbolompo', *JAH Vol 29.*

J. Cobbing
1988

'A Tainted Well: The Objectives, Historical Fantasies and Working Methods of James Stuart, with Counter-Argument', *Journal of Natal and Zulu History Vol 11.*

J. Comaroff
1974

'Chiefship in a South African Homeland: A Case Study of the Tshidi Chiefdom of Bophuthatswana', *JSAS Vol 1 No1.*

J. Comaroff
1981

'Dialectical Systems, History and Anthropology', *JSAS Vol 8 No 1.*

N. Cope
1990

'The Zulu Petty Bourgeoisie and Zulu Nationalism in the 1920s: Origins of Inkatha', *JSAS Vol 16 No 3.*

D. Coplan, T. Quinlan
1997

'A Chief by the People: Nation Versus State in Lesotho', *Africa Vol 67 No 1.*

G. Cornell
1996

'George Webb Hardy's "The Black Peril" and the Social Meaning of "Black Peril" in Early Twentieth Century South Africa', *JSAS Vol 22 No 3.*

S. Cornell
1996

'The Variable Ties That Bind: Content and Circumstance in Ethnic Processes', *Ethnic and Racial Studies Vol 19 No2.*

C. Crais
1992

'Representation and the Politics of Identity in South Africa: An Eastern Cape Example', *IJAHS Vol 25 No 1.*

G. Culwick
1939

'New Ways for Old in the Treatment of Adolescent African Girls', *Africa Vol 12 No2.*

L. Diamond
1987

'Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict: Book review of 'Ethnic Groups in Conflict', by D. Horowitz, *JMAS Vol 25 No 1.*

S. Dubow
1994

'Ethnic Euphemisms and Racial Echoes', *JSAS Vol 20 No 3.*

M. Epprecht
1995

'Women's 'Conservatism' and the Politics of Gender in Late Colonial Lesotho', *JAH Vol 36 No 1.*

P. Forsyth
1992

'The Past in the Service of the Present: The Political Use of History by Chief A.N.M.G. Buthelezi, 1951-1991, *South African Historical Journal Vol 26.*

H. Giliomee
1993

' "Broedertwis": Intra-Afrikaner Conflicts in the Transition from Apartheid', *African Affairs Vol 91 No 362.*

H. Giliomee
1995

'The Non-Racial Franchise and Afrikaner and Coloured Identities, 1910-1994', *African Affairs Vol 94 No 375.*

J. Glenn
1997

'The Interregnum: The South's Insecurity Dilemma', *Nations and Nationalism Vol 3 No 1.*

R. Greenstein
1994
'The Study of South African Society: Towards a New Agenda For Comparative Historical Inquiry', *JSAS Vol 20 No 4.*

J. Guy
1987
'Analysing Pre-Capitalist Societies in Southern Africa', *JSAS Vol 14 No 1.*

J. Guy and M. Thabane
1988
'Technology, Ethnicity and Ideology: Basotho Miners and Shaft - Sinking on the South African Gold Mines', *JSAS Vol 14 No 2.*

C. Hamilton, J. Wright
1990
'The Making of the *AmaLala*: Ethnicity, Ideology and Relations of Subordination in a Precolonial Context', *South African Historical Journal Vol 22.*

K.T. Hansen
1995
'Transnational Biographies and Local Meanings: Used Clothing Practices in Lusaka', *JSAS Vol 21 No1.*

S. Hassim
1993
'Family, Motherhood and Zulu Nationalism: The Politics of the Inkatha Women's Brigade', *Feminist Review No 43.*

S. Heald
1995
'The Power of Sex: Some Reflections on the Caldwells' 'African Sexuality' Thesis', *Africa Vol 65 No4.*

E. Hellman
1935
'Native Life in a Johannesburg Slumyard', *Africa Vol 8 No 1.*

F. Hendricks
1989
'Loose Planning and Rapid Resettlement: The Politics of Conservation and Control in Transkei, South Africa 1950-1970', *JSAS Vol 15 No 2.*

H. Hughes
1987
'Violence in Inanda, August 1985', *JSAS Vol 13 No3.*

I. Hull
1982
'The Bourgeoisie and its Discontents: Reflections on 'Nationalism and Respectability'', *JAH Vol 17 No 2.*

M. Hunter
1933
'The Effects of Contact With Europeans on the Status of Pondo Women', *Africa Vol 16 No 3.*

B. Hutchinson
1957
'Some Social Consequences of Nineteenth Century Missionary Activity Among the South African Bantu', *Africa Vol 27 No1.*

J. Hyslop
1995
'White Working-Class Women and the Invention of Apartheid: 'Purified' Afrikaner Nationalist Agitation for Legislation against 'Mixed' Marriages, 1934-9', *JAH Vol 36 No 1.*

D.D.T. Jabavu
1922
'The Life of John Tengo Jabavu', in *Cory Library South Africa Pamphlets Vol 40.*

D. James
1990
'A Question of Ethnicity: Ndzundza Ndebele in a Lebowa Village', *JSAS Vol 16 No 1.*

K. Jochelson
1995
'Women, Migrancy and Morality: A Problem of Perspective', *JSAS Vol 21 No2.*

P. Kaarsholm
1989
'The Past as Battlefield in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe: The Struggle of Competing Nationalisms over History from Colonisation to Independence', *Societies of Southern Africa in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries Vol 2.*

J. Kinghorn
1994
'Social Cosmology, Religion and Afrikaner Ethnicity', *JSAS Vol 20 No 3.*

S. Klausen
1997
' "For the Sake of Race": Eugenic Discourses of Feeblemindedness and Motherhood in the South African Historical Record, 1903-1926', *JSAS Vol 23 No 1.*

E. Krige
1936
'Changing Conditions in Marital Relations and Parental Duties Among Urbanised Natives', *Africa Vol 9 No 1.*

J. Krikler
1996
'Women, Violence and the Rand Revolt of 1922', *JSAS Vol 22 No 3.*

P. La Hausse
1990
'The Cows of Nongoloza: Youth, Crime and Amalaita Gangs in Durban, 1900-1936', *JSAS Vol 16 No 1.*

P. Larson
1996
'Desparately Seeking "the Merina" (Central Madagascar): Reading Ethnonyms and their Semantic Fields in African Identity Histories', *JSAS Vol 22 No 4.*

M. Legassick
1977
'The Concept of Pluralism: A Critique', in C. W. Gutkind and P. Waterman, *African Social Studies: A Radical Reader.* (London, Heinemann).

J. Lonsdale
1994
'Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism', in *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism, InternationalDevelopment Studies, Occasional Paper No 11.*

R. Love
1996
'Lesotho: Inner to Outer Periphery', *ROAPE No 67.*

N. MacLean
1992
'The Leo Frank Case Reconsidered: Gender and Sexual Politics in the Making of Reactionary Populism', *Journal of American History Vol 78.*

H. MacMillan
1995
'Return to the Malungwana Drift - Max Gluckman, The Zulu Nation and the Common Society', *African Affairs Vol 94 No 374.*

H. MacMillan
1995
'Administrators, Anthropologists and 'Traditionalists' in Colonial Swaziland: the Case of the 'AmaBhaca' Fines', *Africa Vol 65 No 4.*

A. Mafeje
1971
'The Ideology of "Tribalism"', *JMAS Vol 9 No 2.*

B. Magubane
1973
'The "Xhosa" in Town Revisited. Urban Anthropology: A Failure of Method and Theory', *American Anthropologist Vol 75.*

T. Maloka
1994
'"All Chiefs are Sheperds": Populism and Labour Migration in Colonial Lesotho, 1886-1940', *Societies of Southern Africa, Institute of Commonwealth Studies Postgraduate Seminar, 21Oct.*

G. Mare and J. Wright
1994
'Ethnicity, Society and Conflict in Natal', *ROAPE No 59.*

S. Marks
1963
'Harriet Colenso and the Zulus, 1874-1913', *JAH Vol 4 No 3.*

S. Marks
1977
'Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation', *JSAS Vol 4 No 1.*

S. Marks
1994
'Black and White Nationalisms in South Africa: a Comparative Perspective', in *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism, International Development Studies, Occasional Paper No 11.*

P Mayer
1962 'Migrancy and the Study of Africans in Towns', *American Anthropologist Vol 64 No 3 Part 1.*

P Mayer
1978 'Subcultures, Moralities and Migrant Labour', in *Migrant Labour Mimeograph, Rhodes University.*

A. McClintock
1993 'Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family', *Feminist Review No 44.*

P. Merrington
1995 'Pageantry and Primitivism: Dorothea Fairbridge and the "Aesthetics of Union" ', *JSAS Vol 21 No 4.*

T. Moodie
1988 'Migrancy and Male Sexuality on the South African Gold Mines', *JSAS Vol14 No.2.*

T. Moodie
1992 'Ethnic Violence on South African Gold Mines', *JSAS Vol 18 No3.*

H. Moore
1994 'Households and Gender in a South African Bantustan, A Comment', *African Studies Vol 53 No 1.*

S. Morrow
1996 ' "The Things they have Made will live Forever": The Estelle Hamilton-Welsh Collection in the F.S. Malan Museum, University of Fort Hare', *JSAS Vol 22 No 2.*

G. Mosse
1995 'Racism and Nationalism', N*ations and Nationalism, Vol1 No2.*

R. Moyer
1971 'Some Current Manifestations of Early Mfengu History', *Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Collected Seminar Papers Vol 3.*

C. Murray
1987 'Displaced Urbanisation: South Africa's Rural Slums', *African Affairs* Vol 86.

A. Nettleton
1992 'Ethnic and Gender Identities in Venda Domba Statues', *African Studies Vol 51 No 2.*

I. Niehaus
1994 'Disharmonious Spouses and Harmonious Siblings: Conceptualising Household Formation among Urban Residents in Qwaqwa', *African Studies Vol 53 No 1.*

C. Van Onselen and I. Phimister
1978-80

'The Political Economy of Tribal Animosity: A Case Study of the Bulawayo Faction Fight', *JSAS Vol 6 No 1.*

B. Parekh
1995

'Ethnocentricity of the Nationalist Discourse', *Nations and Nationalism Vol 1 Part 1.*

J. Penrose
1995

'Essential Constructions? The 'Cultural Bases' of Nationalist Movements', *Nations and Nationalism Vol 1 Part 3.*

B. Raftopoulos
1994

'Zimbabwe; Race and Nationalism in a Post-Colonial State', in *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism, Occasional Paper 11.*

T. Ranger
1968

'Connexions Between "Primary Resistance" Movements and Modern Mass Nationalismin East and Central Africa. Parts 1 and 2, *JAH Vol 9 No 3.*

T. Ranger
1979

'The Mobilisation of Labour and the Production of knowledge: The Antiquarian Tradition in Rhodesia', *JAH Vol 20 No 4.*

T. Ranger, C. Murray
1981

Introduction to *JSAS Vol 8 No 1.*

T. Ranger
1994

'The Invention of Tradition Revisited', in *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism, Occasional Paper 11.*

H. Sapire
1992

'Politics and Protest in Shack Settlements of the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging Region, South Africa, 1980-1990', *JSAS Vol 18 No 3.*

I. Schapera
1933

'Pre-Marital Pregnancy and Native Opinion. A Note on Social Change', *Africa Vol6 No 1.*

L. Segal
1991

'The Human Face of Violence: Hostel Dwellers Speak', *JSAS Vol 18 No 1.*

K. Shear
1996

' "Not Welfare or Uplift Work"; White Women, Masculinity and Policing in South Africa', *Gender and History Vol 8 No 3.*

T. Shepstone
n.d.
'The Native Question: Answer to President Reitz', *Bristol University Pamphlet, DT 763 CAP* (Reprinted from the *NatalMercury*, Jan 29, 1892).

K. Showers, G. Malahleha
1992
'Oral Evidence in Historical Environmental Impact Assessment: Soil conservation in the 1930s and 1940s', *JSAS Vol 18.*

A. Sitas
1990
'Class, Nation, Ethnicity, in Natal's Black Working Class', *The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries Vol 15 No 38.*

A. Smith
1991
'The Nation: Invented, Imagined, Reconstructed', *Millenium Vol 26 No 3.*

A. Smith
1995
'Gastronomy or Geology? The Role of Nationalism in the Reconstruction of Nations', *Nations and Nationalism Vol 1Part 1.*

S.A. Sofos
1996
'Inter-Ethnic Violence and Gendered Constructions of Ethnicity in Former Yugoslavia', *Social Identities Vol 2 No 1.*

R. Southall
1994
'The 1993 Lesotho Election', *ROAPE No 59.*

M. Szeftel
1994
'Ethnicity and Democratization in South Africa', *ROAPE No 60.*

M. Tamarkin
1995
'Nationalism or 'Tribalism': The Evolution of Cape Afrikaner Ethnic Consciousness in the Late Nineteenth Century', *Nations and Nationalism Vol 1 Part 2.*

H. Tambs-Lyche
1994
'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: Nordic Schools of Approach', in *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism, Occasional Paper No 11.*

M. Thabane
1995
'Some Economic and Technological Factors Behind the Adoption of the Blanket as Basotho Dress', *ROSAS Vol 1 No 1.*

M. Thabane
1996
'A Mutual Benefit Utopia where Exploitation was Unknown? Elizabeth Eldredge's Liberal Interpretation of Social Relations in Nineteenth Century Lesotho', *SAHJ No 34.*

D. Tilton
1991
'Inkatha, Technology and Big Business', *JSAS Vol 18 No 1.*

P. Van den Berghe
1978
'Race and Ethnicity: A Sociological Perspective', *Ethnic and Racial Studies Vol 1 No 4.*

P. Van den Berghe
1995
'Does Race Matter?', *Nations and Nationalism* Vol 1 Part 3.

C. Walker
1994
'Women, 'Tradition' and Reconstruction', *ROAPE No 61.*

C. Walker
1995
'Conceptualising Motherhood in Twentieth Century South Africa', *JSAS Vol 21 No 3.*

D. Webster
1981
Book Review of P. Mayer (ed), 'Black Villagers in an Industrial Society', *JSAS Vol 8, No 1.*

R. Weisfelder
1981
'The Basotho Nation - State: What Legacy for the Future?', *JMAS Vol 19 No 2.*

R. Weisfelder
1992
'Lesotho and the Inner Periphery in the New South Africa', *JMAS Vol 30 No4.*

J. Whitehead
1995
'Bodies Clean and Unclean: Prostitution, Sanitary Legislation, and Respectable Femininity in Colonial North India', *Genderand History Vol 7 No 1.*

E. Wilmsen, S. Dubow, J. Sharp
1994
'Introduction: Ethnicity, Identity and Nationalism in Southern Africa', *JSAS Vol 20 No3.*

F. Wilson
1994
'Ethnicity and Gender in a Modernising World', in *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism, Occasional PaperNo.11.*

G. Wilson
1942
'Essays on the Economics of Detribalization', *Rhodes-Livingston Institute.*

K. Wilson
1992
'Cults of Violence and Counter-Violence in Mozambique', *JSAS Vol 18 No 3.*

H. Wolpe
1972

'Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid', *Economy and Society Vol 1.*

E. Worby
1994

'Maps , Names and Ethnic Games: The Epistomology and Iconography of Colonial Power in Northwestern Zimbabwe', *JSAS Vol 20 No3.*

Research Reports

C. Campbell, G. Mare, C. Walker, with D. Mbona and N. Marawa
1995

'Part Three. Just About Being: Social Identities and Working People', in A. Sitas (Project coordinator), *Managing Change in Kwazulu-Natal's Industries: A Research Report to the CSD/HSRC*, Centre for Industrial and Labour Studies, University of Natal, Durban.

Secondary Sources: Unpublished Theses

C. Hamilton
1985

'Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power in the Early Zulu Kingdom', *MA thesis, University of Witwatersrand.*

B.B. Keller
1970

'The Origins of Modernism and Conservatism Among the Cape Nguni', *Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of California.*

J. Kimble
1985

'Migrant Labour and Colonial Rule in Southern Africa: The Case of Colonial Basutoland, 1890-1930', *Ph.D. thesis, University of Essex.*

A. Liebenberg
1994

'Authority, Avoidances and Marriage: An Analysis of the Position of Gcaleka Women in Qwaninga, Willowvale District, Transkei', *MA thesis, Rhodes University.*

R. Moyer
1976

'A History of the Mfengu of the South Eastern Cape, 1855-65', *Ph.D thesis, London University.*

L. Ntsebeza
1993

'Youth in Urban African Townships, 1945-1992: A Case Study of the East London Townships', *MA thesis, University of Natal.*

T. Quinlan
1994

'Marena A Lesotho: Chiefs, Politics and Culture in Lesotho', *Ph.D thesis, University of Cape Town.*

A. Webster
1991 'Land Expropriation and Labour Extraction Under Cape Colonial Rule: The War of 1835 and the "Emancipation" of the Fingo', *MA thesis, Rhodes University.*

Secondary Sources: Unpublished Papers

C. Badenhorst, C. Mather
n.d. 'Tribal Recreation and Recreating Tribalism: Culture, Leisure and Social Control on South Africa's Gold Mines, 1940-1950'. Unpublished Manuscript.

L. Bank
1995 'The Failure of Ethnic Nationalism: Land, Power and the Politics of Clanship on the South African Highveld, 1860-1990'. Unpublished Manuscript.

C. Crais
1995 'Of Men, Magic and the Law: Masculinity, Violence and the Imagination in South Africa'. Unpublished Manuscript.

I. Filatova
n.d. 'Interpretations of the Dogma: Soviet Concepts of Nation and Ethnicity'. Unpublished Manuscript.

I. Mayer, P. Mayer
1972 'Self-Organisation Amongst Xhosa Youth, Vols 1 and 2', Cory Library, Rhodes University. Unpublished Manuscript.

P. Qayiso
circa 1964 'Xhosa Morality'. MS 16891/5, Cory Library, Rhodes University, Unpublished Manuscript.

T. Ranger
1995 'The Nature of Ethnicity: Lessons from Africa'. Unpublished Manuscript.

T. Stapleton
1995 'Oral Evidence in a Pseudo-Ethnicity: The Fingo Debate'. Unpublished Manuscript.

T. Stapleton
1996 'Gathering Under the Milkwood Tree: The Development of Mfengu Tribalism in the Eastern Cape (1878-1978). Unpublished Manuscript.

J. Wright
1977 'Pre-Shakan Age-Group Formation Among the Northern Nguni', PR 3956, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

Novels

M. Dikobe
1988 *The Marabi Dance.* (Oxford, Heinemann).

Primary Sources

Cape Parliamentary Papers, C4
1863 *Cape of Good Hope. The Report and Proceedings of the Committee of the Legislative Council on Cattle Thefts.*

J. Thompson
1853 *Mission Among the Kaffirs and Fingoes of Southern Africa.* (Cory Library , Rhodes University. PR 1615).